THE UK'S **BEST SELLING** TATTOO MAGAZINE

Skin Deep



Free Inside
SKIN SHOTS SAMPLER

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW **JESSE SMITH GIVES TANANÉ WHITFIELD A GRILLING**

LIMITED EDITION COVER • 208 • LIMITED EDITION COVER

PLUS ALL THIS

TATTOOS AT THE MOVIES

DIEGO BRANDI

MARIJA RIPLEY

TATTOOS & TENTACLES

GUIL ZEKRI

MASTERCHEF GRAHAM ELLIOT

BERLIN SHOW REVIEWED

ISSUE 208 • MARCH 2012 • £4.25

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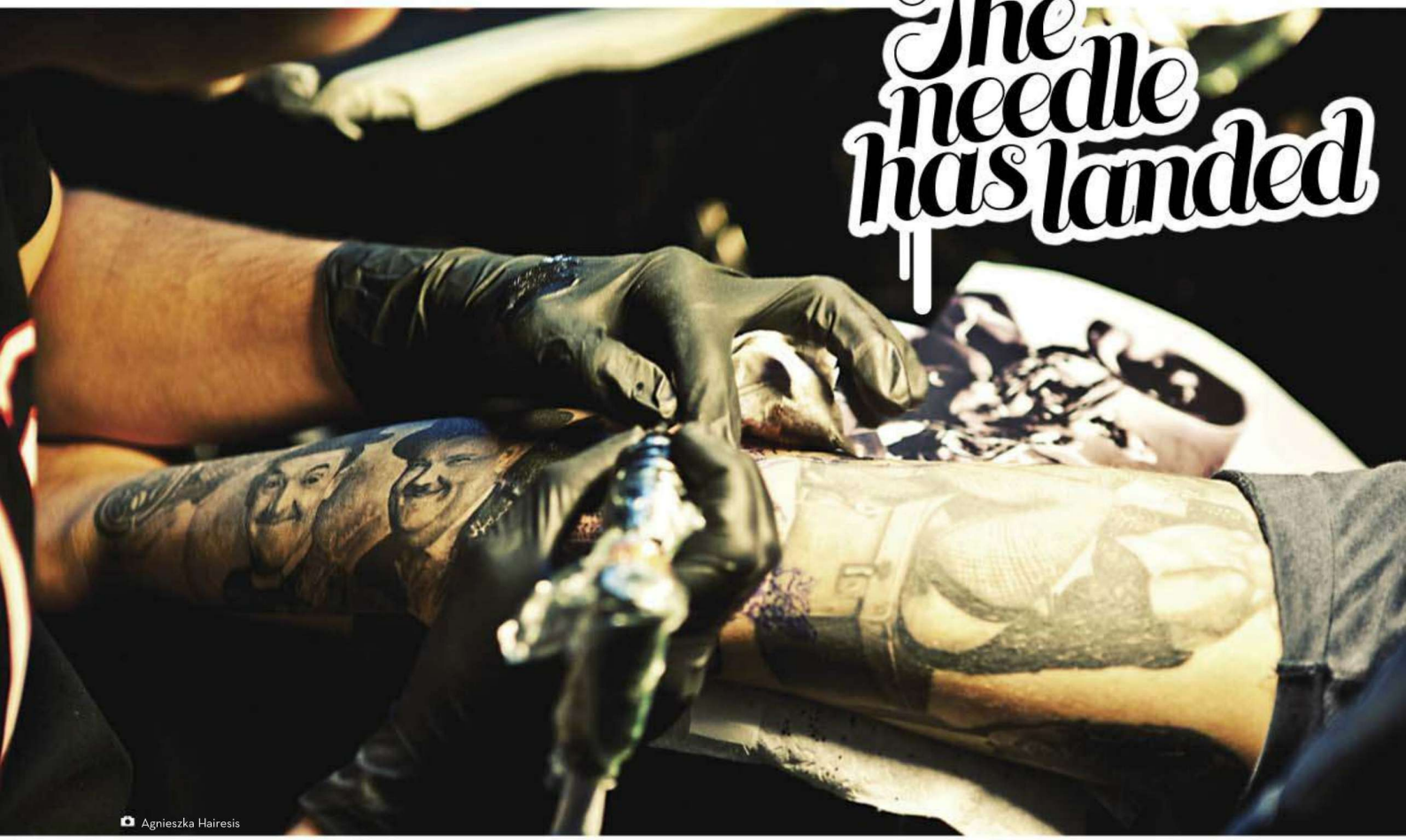
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The needle has landed



Agnieszka Hairesis

WHATEVER GETS YOU THROUGH THE NIGHT

During the new year festivities, I had a semi-drunken conversation with David Gamble (our beloved publisher) about religion. Mr Gamble is not particularly religious at all. In fact, he's an out and out heathen – probably because the Gods took away all his hair and enforced Talking Heads as 'favourite band' on his psyche. Personally speaking, I'm Pagan to the core and am an unabashed Kiss fan. We all have our crosses to bear.

I decided a long time ago that I didn't want any supernatural overlords that were human pushing my spirit around. Things that lurk in the darkness of the woods with antlers is fine and dandy, but following a man-made construction of what's important? Not for me I'm afraid.

The beauty of the conversation was that we both heard and listened to what each other had to say, didn't mock (well apart from the hair/Kiss thing) and appreciated the fact that it takes all kinds of people to keep the world spinning, each bringing their own views to the table. It was a cool start to the year.

I don't think I get this across often enough in Skin Deep. It's hard work listening to everybody that comes along and then deciding what readers will be interested in as a collective – particularly as there's nothing more personal on the face of the planet than a tattoo. I got a roasting from a smart-arse a few months back who proudly told me I was nothing less than a hypocrite as in one article I published how the artist, Noon, was self-taught in far less than ideal circumstances, while in another article, we were saying how important getting an apprenticeship was.

I may be the mag editor, but I am not – and we are not – the tattoo police. I don't have a stance on the matter. It's going to happen one way or another whether I have an opinion or not. Those choices are for people who want to tattoo to make, not me – I'm a writer.

I MAY BE THE MAG EDITOR, BUT I AM NOT – AND WE ARE NOT – THE TATTOO POLICE. THOSE CHOICES ARE FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO TATTOO TO MAKE, NOT ME – I'M A WRITER

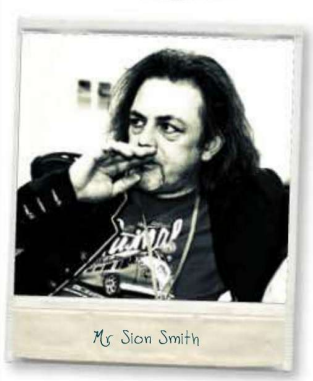
We've done some good work on this magazine in the last 12 months. Turned some big corners. It would be great to go further and that's the goal, so let's make it happen.

On which subject, if you're feeling techno and own an ipad, jump on the apple newsstand and check out the totally redesigned interactive Skin Deep magazine experience. You can find it by searching for Skin Deep in either the newsstand app or on iTunes. It warms my heart to unleash this!

Anyway, we're only here to have kids if we can and look after the place. The planet keeps turning regardless. Look after your own shit, get some ink, love your friends and family and give something back to the world every now and again. Harm none is a good rule to live by.

Bloody hippy. Be cool to each other...

Sion



Mr Sion Smith

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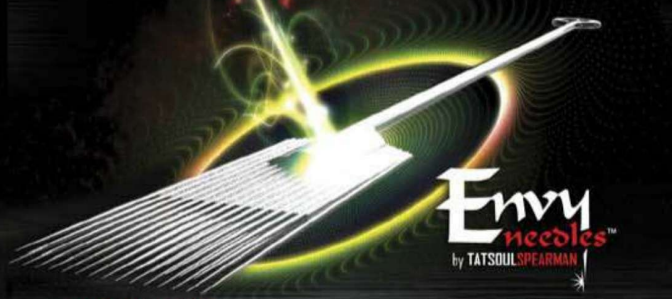
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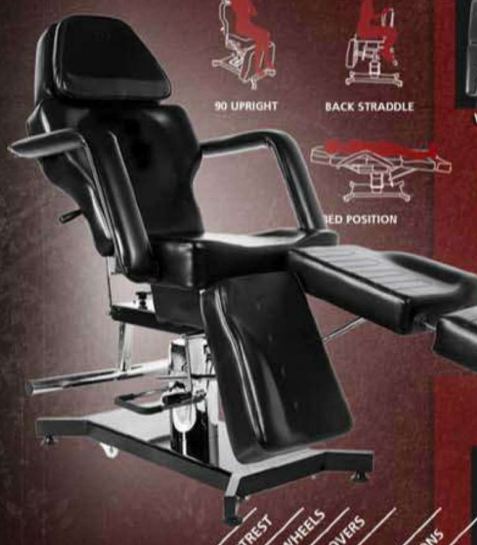
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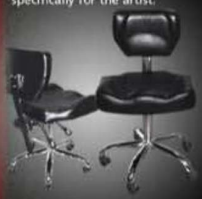




HYDRAULIC PRO (fc:362) £ 430

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1929L POWER LINER

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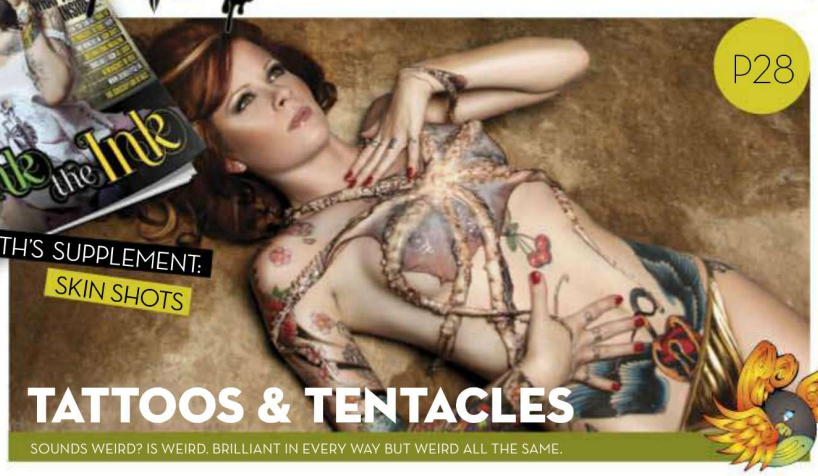
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WE HAVE NO WORDS TO EXPLAIN JUST HOW INCREDIBLE MR BRANDI IS. THE WORK MORE THAN SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT!



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THIS ONE NEEDS NO INTRODUCTION. THUS, NONE GIVEN. ENJOY!



THIS MONTH'S SUPPLEMENT: SKIN SHOTS



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SOUNDS WEIRD? IS WEIRD. BRILLIANT IN EVERY WAY BUT WEIRD ALL THE SAME.

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COVER CREDIT: **SCOTT COLE**

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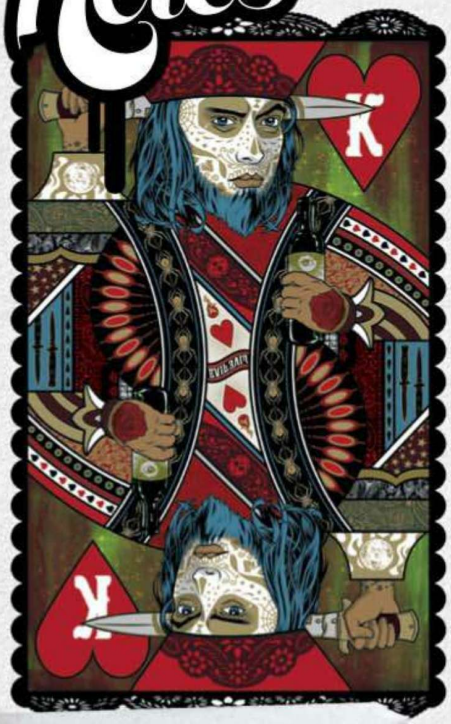
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Sleeve Notes

twitter.com/skindeepmag www.facebook.com/tattoomagazine

ALL SUBMISSIONS TO SLEEVE NOTES GRATEFULLY RECEIVED. BE IT NEWS, AN EVENT, NEW MERCH, A STUDIO MOVE... WE'LL DO OUR VERY BEST TO LET EVERYBODY ELSE KNOW ABOUT IT TOO. EMAIL: ***EDITOR@SKINDEEP.CO.UK*** OR IF YOU WANT TO BE ARCHAIC ABOUT THE WHOLE AFFAIR: SKIN DEEP, THE OLD SCHOOL, HIGHER KINNERTON, CHESTER CH4 9AJ. BRING IT.





THE RAIN KING

Brian Ewing has been up to his fancy tricks again. Prints of 'Suicide King' and 'Suicide Queen' are currently available exclusively from the Get Up Gallery at getupgallery.bigcartel.com. They kick in as 18x24, seven color screen prints and are all signed and numbered with only 115 of each avaiable. Mr Ewing is also hitting the road and has some neat events happening soon. Check out his site brianewing.com for more info.

THE GREAT BRITISH TATTOO SHOW



April 21-22 sees the launch of The Great British Tattoo Show – a first for Jazz Publishing as we venture into London for a tattooed lifestyle show with a difference. The event will be split into three sections, namely: Traditional, Contemporary and Urban. What that actually entails is as much up to you as it is us – whatever you make of it though, we're looking forward to you bringing your art to whichever tribe you see fit! Tickets on sale now at *greatbritishtattooshow.com*

LATE VACANCY

Flaming Gun Tattoo Studio are looking to take on another artist to join our team. "We are a well established and very busy, hard working studio. We cover all aspects of tattooing and our work is custom based so a good all rounder is preferred but not essential. Minimum of two years shop experience. Please have portfolio available for the interview. Email us at *flamingguntattoo@aol.com* with a covering letter and a few photos of recent work. Our number: 01206 575705"



SHORT SLEEVES

WHAT TIME IS IT?

Everybody's favourite crazy Frenchman, **Noon**, is still on the road. Here's his schedule for the rest of the year so far:

NYC (Tattoo Culture) from the April 26 to June 1, 2012. Bookings still available at time of writing.

France: "I am now proposing day appointment for a unique price. This is new and a good alternative to come and visit me in a less commercial and more friendly spirit. It is also a good alternative to work on bigger project as we have no timing to be stressed with. And finally, it is an opportunity to enjoy the nice historical city where I am living and eventually spend good time together! Next availabilities are from September 2012."

London at The Family Business. Already booked up for all the next coming year! But you can write if you want to be in the priority waiting list in case of any cancellation. I will probably be back in Berlin by end of next year, but the dates are still to be scheduled.

Confirmed conventions:

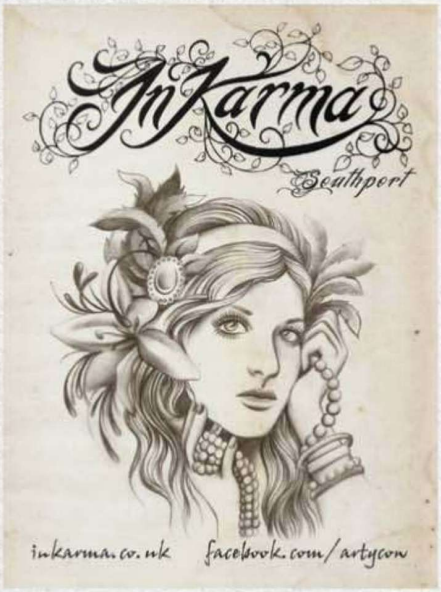
September 13-16 2012: Paradise Tattoo Gathering – Colorado (USA)

October 19-21 2012: Evian Tattoo Convention (France). Contact Noon by email (noon.bt@free.fr) for any appointment.

GUEST SPOT

From 1 Feb, 2012 to 8 Feb, 2012, Marcin from Inkdependant Edinburgh will be working at Timeless Tattoo, Glasgow.
Get booking!

SHORT SLEEVES



JOB SPOT

InKarma in Southport is now open for business – the observant and local among you will notice it has been for some time. However, Juliet Preston's long-term service at Big Tattoo Planet allows her an access all areas pass to the 'big pages' for an honourable/gratuitous business pimp, but they're also looking for an artist. Experience is essential and I quote: "A strong portfolio and excellent work ethic is a must. References will be required. Short term relocation help is available."

You can contact Juliet at: InKarma Tattoo Studio, 123/125 Eastbank Street, Southport, PR8 1DQ, or inkarma@hotmail.co.uk.

www.facebook.com/inkarmas and www.facebook.com/artycow.

KIDS STUFF

Booby Trap make cool stuff for boys and girls. A young company based out of Los Angeles, they've designed glow-in-the-dark one-zees, T-shirts, and dresses so that "you'll never lose your child in a crowded playroom". Nice idea!

www.boobytrapshop.com.

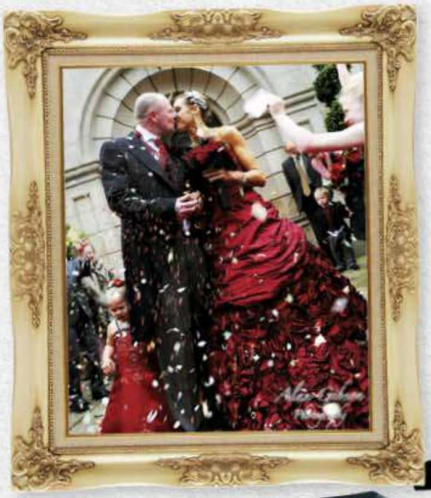
NEW STUDIO

A new studio in the heart of Oxford is now open for business: Oxford Tattoo, 100 St Aldates, Oxford, OX1 1BT. Telephone: 01865 791893 or visit facebook.com/oxfordtattoo.

RANDOM READER

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPH OF THE MONTH

Tattoo artist, Paul Egan (of Wishful Inkin), got married recently to partner of nine years, Elaine. They were married at Wynyard Hall near Hartlepool and of note here is that very, very sexy tattoo themed wedding cake. Mmmm. Chocolate… good work everybody!







MEGA IRON FIST GIVEAWAY!

So successful was our Ironfist giveaway last issue, we're extending it to this issue as well. What we're going to do is split them into male/female and ship out twice as many as we intended. You can't argue with that!

As before, just send an email to: editor@skindeep.co.uk with the subject line of IRONFIST and we'll do the rest. Designs will be picked at random and we'll try and be sensible with the sizes!

Conventions

All details correct at time of going to press.

February 10-12
BEST IN THE MID WEST TATTOO CONVENTION
Mid America Center, Hilton Horseshoe Casino Hotel, Council Bluffs, Iowa, USA
www.shaneoneillproductions.com
empiretattoo08@yahoo.com

February 19
NORTHWICH CHARITY TATTOO & ART EXPO
Winnington Park Recreation Club
Northwich, Cheshire, England
www.northwichtattooexpo.co.uk

February 25-26
INTERNATIONAL TATTOO & ART
Expo Claudelands Event Centre
Hamilton, New Zealand
www.tattooart.co.nz

March 10-11
ROTTERDAM TATTOO CONVENTION
Rotterdam, Netherlands
www.unitedconventions.com

March 16-18
LADY LUCK TATTOO EXPO
Circus Circus Hotel & Casino, Reno
Nevada, USA
www.ladylucktattooexpo.com

March 25
10TH PETERLEE TATTOO ARTS FESTIVAL
Peterlee Leisure Centre, Durham, England
Contact Trudy @ Eddies Tattoo Studio
0191 5871787 *eddie@ehardiman.orangehome.co.uk*

April 1
INK & IRON TATTOO CONVENTION
The Tower, Reservoir Road, Edgbaston
Birmingham, England
www.inkandiron.co.uk

April 8-9
FIRST INTERNATIONAL SOUTHEND TATTOO CONVENTION
The Kursaal, Southend Sea Front
Southend-on-Sea, Essex, England
12 midday till 12 midnight (both days)
Contact Eddie Roberts on 01702 616666
www.southendtattoo.com

April 13-15
NORTH WEST TATTOO SHOW
(formerly The Killybegs Tattoo Convention)
The Abbey Hotel, Donegal Town, Ireland
Info: Ruth or Liosa from Zombie Dolls Tattoo Parlour on 00353 74 9722440
northwesttattooshow@ireland.com

April 14-15
NORTH LAKES TATTOO SHOW
The Shepherds Inn, Carlisle,
Cumbria, England 01228 545156
www.northlakestattooshow.co.uk
northlakestattooshow@aol.com



SHARP SEATS?

Over at The Sharp Practice in Salisbury, Matt has been busy putting his skills to another use, air-brushing these pretty cool toilet seats. If you're in the market to sharpen up your bathroom, look no further! Get in touch with Matt for a custom job at: info@sharp-practice.com. Skateboards, bike helmets and just about anything else you can lay your hands on can also be catered for.

EVEN MORE SHORT SLEEVES

MOVED HOUSE

Neil Dransfield from Ispirations has now moved to Odd Fellows Tattoo, Thornton Arcade, Leeds.

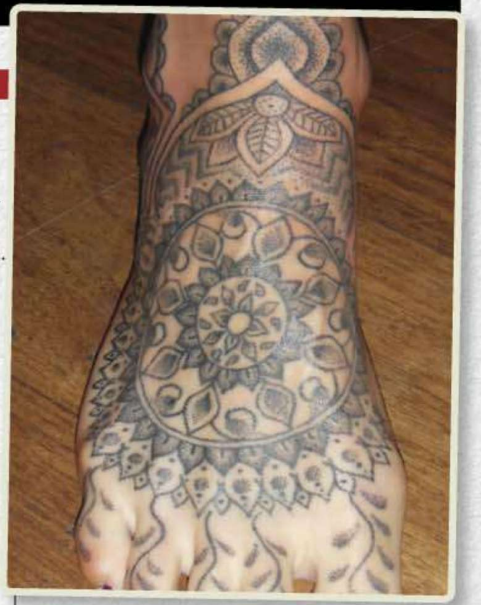
SKINNY'S CHARITY BASH

Skinnys Ink are hosting a charity event on March 18 for TROOP AID to raise some much needed cash – all profits for the day will be going direct to the charity. The shop will be open from 10am to 10pm where their own artists and a few guest artists will be involved in the project.

Due to the expected high volume of customers for that day, Skinny's will only be doing a select amount of designs that relate to the charity – so far there are eight confirmed designs, each going for £20. For more info on the day, give Skinny's a call on 0121 459 4848. Skinny's Ink: 1276 Pershore Road, Birmingham.

MOVING SKIN

Style On Skin has moved from Stevenage Indoor Market into Stevenage Town Centre at 10/12 Park Place, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG1 1DP. www.styleonskin.com.



BOFF @ 13 DIAMONDS

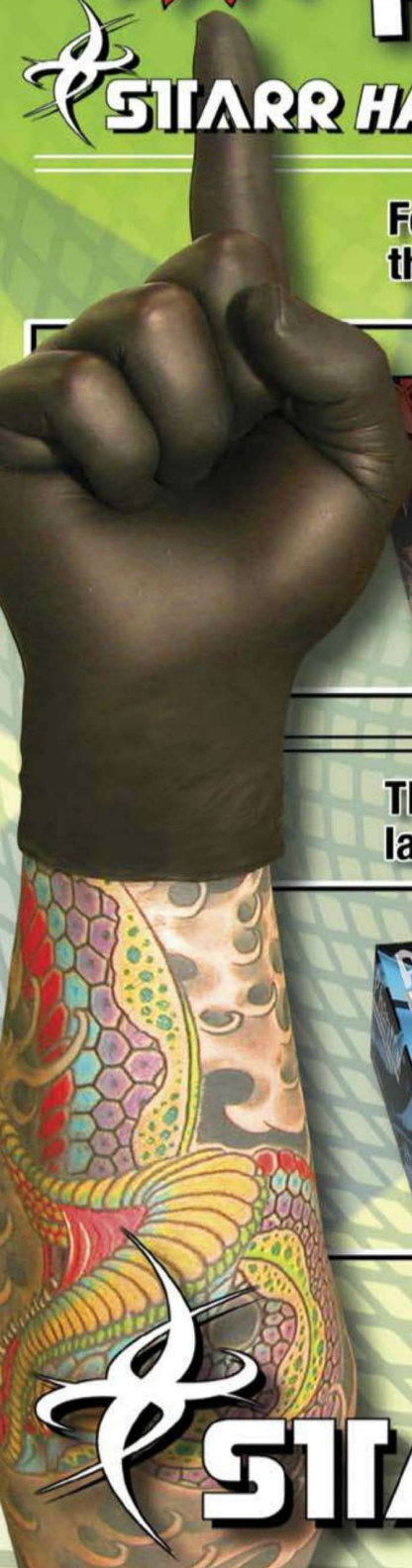
Boff Konkerz is a tattoo artist who has never used an electric tattoo machine. He uses a simple hand tool to create his work. Favouring black ink he produces a variety of work, mainly using dot-shading, which lends itself to this method of tattooing. And lucky for you that Boff will be at 13 Diamonds from Feb 8 to 13 for consultations/ bookings. Contact on: info@13diamonds.com or 02074 370032.

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STARR HAS A GLOVE THAT WILL FIT YOUR NEEDS:

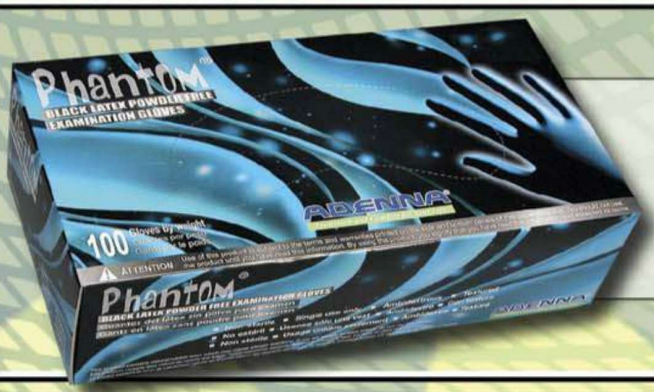


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Conventions

All details correct at time of going to press.

April 14-15
2ND TATTOO EXTRAVAGANZA
Portsmouth Pyramids Centre
Southsea Sea Front, Portsmouth, England
All enquiries, contact Reno on 07907 009161
www.tattooextravaganza.co.uk
tattooextravaganza@live.co.uk

April 15-17
WEST COAST TATTOO SHOW
PNE Forum, Vancouver, BC, Canada
www.westcoasttattooshow.com

APRIL 21-22
GREAT BRITISH TATTOO SHOW
London Olympia, England
www.britishtattooshow.com

May 5-6
LIVERPOOL TATTOO CONVENTION
Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, England
www.tattooconvention.co.uk

May 12-13
PLYMOUTH TATTOO CONVENTION
Guildhall, Plymouth, Devon, England
www.plymouthtattooconvention.co.uk

May 19-20
NORTHAMPTON INTERNATIONAL TATTOO
Tea Party Rodbur Suite, Northampton Saints Rugby Ground, England
01604 949958
www.northamptoninternational-tattooconvention.com
sunsandrosestattoo@hotmail.com

May 26-27
BOURNEMOUTH TATTOO CONVENTION
Bournemouth International Convention Centre, Exeter Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, England
www.bournemouthtattooconvention.com

May 26-27
SUMMER INK FEST
Genk, Belgium
www.summerinkfest.be
info@summerinkfest.be

June 2-3
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE TATCON
St George's Hall, St George's Avenue, Northampton, NN2 6JA
www.tatcon.co.uk
peter@tatcon.co.uk

June 2-3
KRAKOW TATTOOFEST
Klimeckiego 14, Krakow, Poland
www.tattoofest.pl

June 9-10
MK TATTOO CONVENTION
Milton Keynes, England
www.mktattooconvention.co.uk

PUNK'S NOT DEAD



No, no, no – not that sort of punk. Punk of the steam variety – and the second I saw these, I knew there would be an instant fanbase – if not for the actual concepts, then for miles and miles of inkspiration…

The last bit of animated steampunkery we saw from Disney was in *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*. Sadly, most of the steam driven gadgets were traded for fluorescent face paint. But take a look at this – the perfect bit of Disneyesque concept art that's a perfect starting place for a princess with plenty of technological know-how!

This series of steamy princesses is drawn by Brian Kesinger and they're also available for purchase on his website at brian-kesinger.artistwebsites.com. There's a reason these ladies look like they were born under a glistening Epcot ball. Kesinger is a story artist at Walt Disney animation studios, which only makes us want a lovely, octopus-walking princess all the more.

As for Brian himself, he has this to say: "I have been fortunate to wear many hats within the animation industry. My artistic travels have lead me to my current position as a story artist at Walt Disney animation studios. I am inspired by the amazing work of my friends and co-workers, as well as an eagerness to learn. I hope to share my learning experience with you and maybe even offer some inspiration as a way of giving back to the community of artists who have given so much to me."

If any of you do succumb to the call of the art, we'd love to see the end results… pretty sure Brian would too.

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SUICIDE



The Bombshell

Helena Linder. You may recognise her as being one of the lovely faces of Glorious Nightmare. Alternatively, you might know her as one of your Thursday evening buddies at dog-training club. If you're really close, you might even know her better as the beau of Justin from The Darkness. If you don't know her at all, you will shortly. We couldn't shut her up...

I was born in Umeå and grew up in Arvidsjaur, which is a town in central Lapland. I feel very lucky to have been brought up in that part of the world – safe, beautiful and unspoilt. You wouldn't find a McDonald's there. Not many people know that Lapland is also in Sweden – it is an area that includes the northern part of Sweden, Norway and Finland. It's good that the majority of the world are unaware that there's a Swedish part of Lapland too, as I'd hate to see it invaded with tourists.

I am very proud to be Swedish. It's a country full of undiscovered, unique talent and good food. In a selfish way, I think it's nice that some of our culture never makes it outside of Sweden – it's gutting to see Hollywood remaking *Let the Right One In* – a film that was already perfect in every way. Now the Stieg Larsson movies are being remade. I compare it to drawing a moustache on the Mona Lisa – totally unnecessary.

I grew up in a sporty environment, rather than artistic, but I was drawn to the world of music from an early age. My parents were supportive and bought me instruments and took me to music classes. I was competing in both running and skiing so I think they were a little bit disappointed that I didn't pursue that. Although I was always the wild child (Dad's genes), I still think they were a bit shocked when I got my first tattoo aged 18.

I had very little exposure to tattoos as a child, which might be why I became so fascinated with them later on in life. Same goes with getting involved in the music industry and moving to London – that was exciting; a totally different world to what I was used to.



Sion Smith

ANOTHER IMPORTANT TATTOO IS A PINUP OF MYSELF, WITH MY LITTLE TAIL-LESS RESCUE CAT. I HAD IT DONE AT A POINT IN MY LIFE WHEN I FELT I HAD LOST PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING I HAD, APART FROM HIM. IT REPRESENTED THE TWO OF US AGAINST THE WORLD

I grew up on ABBA, The Rolling Stones, Creedence Clearwater Revival and Queen – my parents have pretty good taste in music. When I was five, I remember cycling up and down the road we lived on, singing 'We're Not Gonna Take It' by Twisted Sister at the top of my lungs. My first ever gig was Electric Boys. I was very young and my Mum insisted on coming with me, which of course, was embarrassing! When I was 12, I discovered Guns 'n' Roses – my all-time favourite band. I also loved Metallica and Poison, and longed for an exciting rock 'n' roll lifestyle outside of my safe bubble in Sweden.

So when I finished high school, I booked a one-way ticket to London. The day I arrived, The Exploited played at Camden Underworld, which is where I got my first job – handing out flyers in exchange for a couple of pounds and free entrance to the shows. I was hanging out with punks in Camden and ended up moving in with Charlie Harper of UK Subs. I shared a house in Crouch Hill, Finsbury Park, with my best friend Kajsa, Charlie Harper, Eddie from The Vibrators, and John Ellis from The Stranglers. Then I went on to work for PRS, Ministry of Sound, Chrysalis and as a UK artist rep for Sabian Cymbals.

As far as my tattoos go, they aren't really related to music – they are more influenced by life experiences and things I love, although some of





my tattoos are purely artwork with no personal meaning behind them. I have a caricature of my first cat Jameson, on my foot, in the style of a Japanese maneki neko. On the back of my neck, I have three crowns and my surname underneath. 'Tre Kronor' (three crowns) is the symbol of Sweden. Another important tattoo is a pin-up of myself, with my little tail-less rescue cat, Smell Bear. I had it done at a point in my life when I felt I had lost pretty much everything I had, apart from him. It represented the two of us against the world. I am a huge animal lover and put a lot of my feelings and emotions into my relationship with my pets. I prefer the company of my animals to that of human company, any day. And yes, I do think that makes me slightly weird…

I got my first tattoo on my 18th birthday. It's a stereotypical tribal band around my arm. I don't regret it, but I wouldn't have chosen it today either. Laying in the tattoo chair for the first time ever was a great buzz – we listened to Thin Lizzy and I felt important and grown up! I had asked for a tattoo for my birthday, but Mum and Dad refused. So when they asked me if I wanted anything instead, I said I wanted money. So I paid for the tattoo with my birthday money and probably pissed them off a little because of it.

I was introduced to Steve A at The Shooting Gallery in Bournemouth and he ended up finishing my sleeve. He is more than a tattoo artist – he is a real, true artist. My sleeve had already been started by someone else, but I wasn't happy with it. Steve really listened to my concerns, came up with suggestions and in the end turned my sleeve into a beautiful piece of art; he is very passionate and serious about his art.

Steve also became a good friend of mine, which makes everything a lot more special. I would be reluctant using anyone else now. Having said that, two of my favourite tattoos ever (crowns on the back of my neck and the cat on my foot) were done by Luci Lou at Diamond Jacks in London. She is also a great artist – very good at feminine and delicate work – I would happily book in with her again; I think she works in Brighton now. I am open to discovering new tattoo artists though and if I went abroad, I'd be happy to try a new artist for the occasion, but at the same time I think that when you've found 'the one', you should stick with them! I am planning another full sleeve. Just need the time and money.

As far as getting my face around the world goes, Craig Pearce, the creator of Glorious Nightmare, contacted me via ModelMayhem. A lot of clothing labels (especially new ones) expect models to work in exchange for clothing, but Craig never assumed this and offered to pay me straight away. I had a look at his website, and the fact that he used Arabella Drummond for his launch shoot said a lot about his company.

We shot on a beach in Lowestoft with photographer Sam Gee. Everyone had a great time and we have all stayed in touch since. I have plans to shoot for Glorious Nightmare again and I have already had anther shoot with Sam. A professional approach goes a long way! If someone would assume I'd work in any other way just because I'm covered in tattoos it wouldn't be worth working with them in the first place. I really have no time for discriminating behaviour. Basically, don't be a dick.

I'm not a model though – I just love posing for the camera. Getting paid for it is a plus! I'm an exhibitionist at heart and I love dressing up and having my picture taken, but I don't pursue modelling as a career. The way I see it is if a company wants a pretty Swedish girl with natural blonde hair, a larger-than-average chest, covered in tattoos to represent their stuff, then I'm their girl. If they don't, I won't be crying myself to sleep over it.

I have worked for great companies, such as What Katie Did, Torture Garden Clothing, Ugly Kids Club, Mint Siren, etc. and used to be one of the corset models for Morgana Femme Couture, so I've done well so far. Personally, I prefer looking at tattooed models to those without tattoos. Tattoos are so exciting – they tell a story about you whether that's your intention or not.

Justin and I are both huge animal

I PREFER THE COMPANY OF MY ANIMALS TO THAT OF HUMAN COMPANY, ANY DAY. AND YES, I DO THINK THAT MAKES ME SLIGHTLY WEIRD...

lovers and really struggle not to get new pets every week. We have two dogs; a long-coated Chihuahua named Buddy, and a rough-coated Griffon Bruxellois named Bonnie. We also have two cats; a glitter coated Bengal named Cully, and a tail-less rescue moggy named Smell Bear.

The dogs haven't been on tour with Justin yet, but they go to the recording studio all the time, and love it. I am actually getting their little suitcases ready as they're off to the studio in Wales tomorrow.

Buddy, Bonnie and their good chum, Kenny, (owned by producer Nick Brine) are all part of a notorious canine crew called The Gravy Bone Gang, and they all hang out at the studio together, getting up to all sorts of mischief. They will be going on tour at some point, probably much to the rest of the band's dismay. Bonnie loves barking, and loves bullying people, especially Ed (the drummer). She spends ages just standing there barking at him. If he tells her off, she'll bark even louder. If he ignores her, she'll attack his leg and scratch it really hard.

It's always total chaos at home; the dogs are very loud. When we have guests round it's hard to have a normal conversation as Bonnie will be standing in the middle, yapping her head off. You often find Smell Bear sitting in the kitchen sink, licking the taps, and Buddy loves pissing on the pinball machine legs. Cully and Bonnie are the drama queens of the house; when they're not sleeping they'll be strutting around, yelling and moaning at everything and they are only ever happy when they gets things their way.

According to Justin, they're just typical females. I have no idea what he means with that – and don't even get me started on all the organising when we're going away...

PART TWO

ONCE WERE WARRIORS

Our final stop of the trip is Auckland which is exciting me for a few reasons, firstly I am working the convention here, secondly I am having a machine hand-built by the awesome Marv Lerning, and lastly, I will be working at Two Hands Tattoo with fellow Londoner, Nick Whybrow

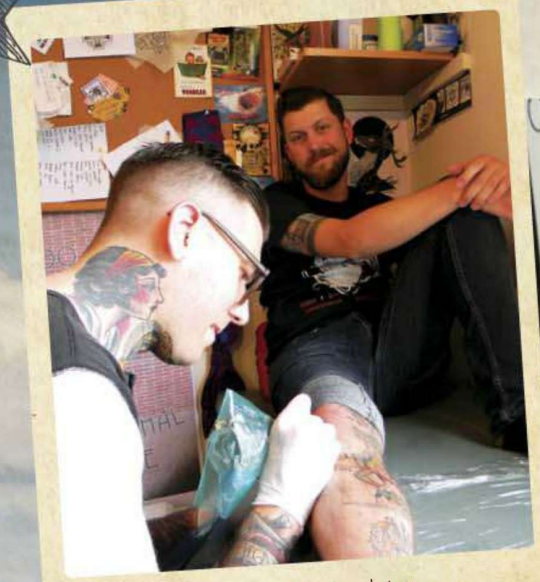




Craigy Lee

Along with owner Stefan, Victor, Rachi T, Lukis, Josh and Kieran all work full-time at the shop and with the convention just around the corner, Two Hands is literally bursting at the seams! Stefan is very welcoming to travelling artists and as a result there are nine of us working here this week; the shop is open long hours and we all split up the day to accommodate the tattoos we have to do, working all day and night. It's an inspirational place to be, art work and flash by artists from all over the world adorns the wall-space giving it the old school flavour, but Stephan has injected his own modern twist.

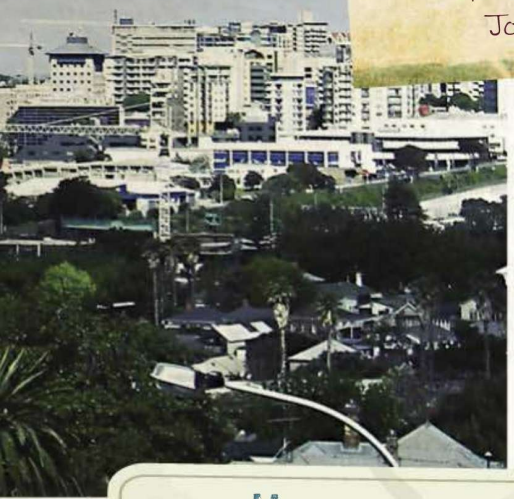
On a day off I finally get over to visit the very talented and much sought-after master machine builder, Marv Lerning; we spend the day with him as he hand-builds me a machine from start to finish. We start off by picking the frame style, which Marv welds and sands, it is then sprayed and oven baked while the coils are hand wound and assembled. When the frame is dry, the coils are screwed into place and the springs are cut (again by hand) and placed on the armature bar – the last few screws and washers are assembled, some tuning and my machine is ready. It's an awesome experience watching it come to life from bare components to a fully working machine. They don't get more custom than that. To check out his creations visit his website at www.westernmagnetic.com. Marv also puts the same care and attention into his guests; his workshop is very busy over the next few days with the arrival of his friends, not just local artists, but internationals as well, all



Getting tattooed by Josh at Two Hands

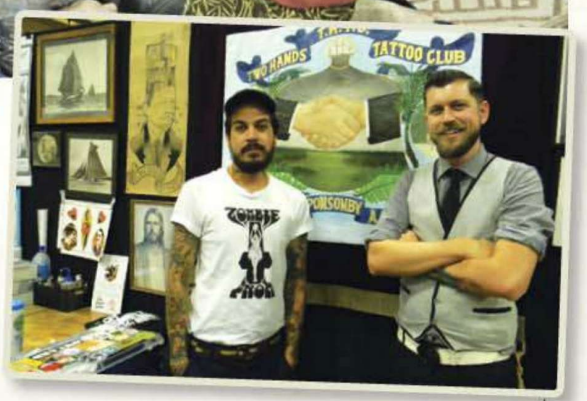


Working hard





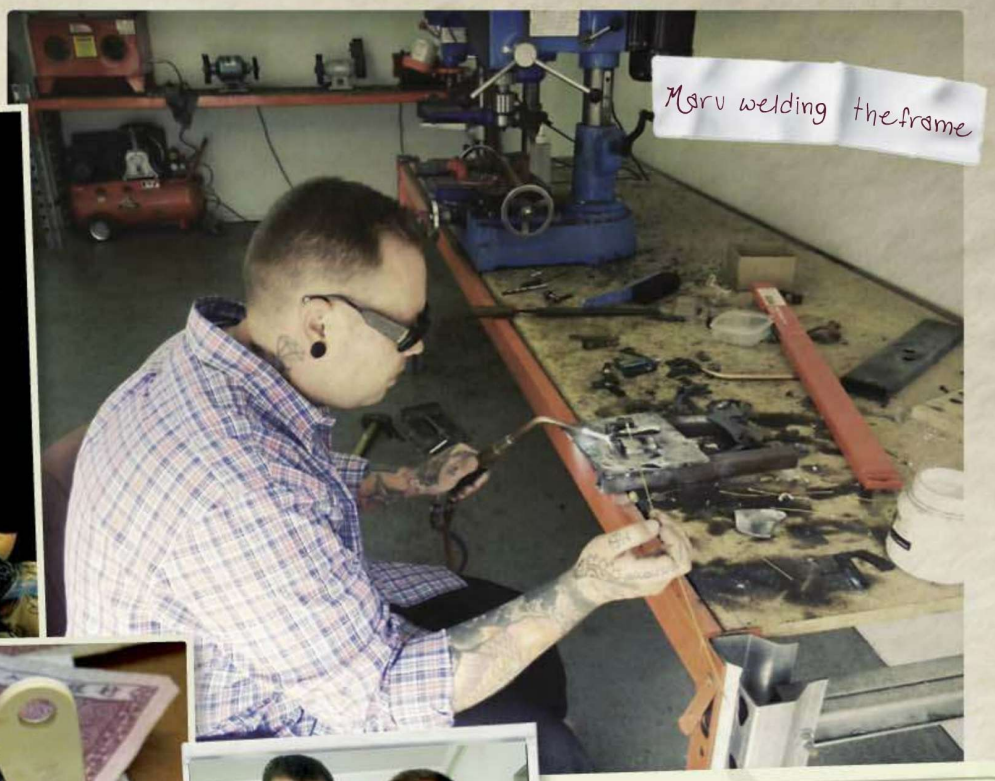
Traditional Hand Tattooing



here for the Auckland International Tattoo Convention. We all get to meet, barbeque and break the ice a little, Marv is a most awesome host!

The convention is two days long and runs every other year; we arrive on Friday afternoon for the official 'Powiri', a welcoming and blessing from the local Maori and the Ta Moko tattoo trust, which in itself is a great experience. The visiting artists all wait in a group outside the venue as the Karanga (call of welcome) begins by the Tangata Whenua (hosts) this involves singing and three Maori warriors who come towards us with spears showing off their prowess before finally laying down an offering, which we accept to show we are friendly and consequently are welcomed into the venue. The visitors sit opposite the hosts and many prayers, blessings and speeches take place, each one followed by a song. A gift is placed before the hosts indicating that the speeches are finished which is accepted, and then we are invited to shake hands a touch noses, indicating that the two groups have become one for the duration of the event. Afterwards we share food, socialise and finally get down to setting up our booths for the show. I have worked a fair few conventions over the years and this is the first time I have had the pleasure of such a welcome, it really brings all the artists together and





Maru welding the frame



My machine nearly finished



Maru Lerning



Lucky Diamond Rich

gets people talking and mixing before the show begins, making it a much friendlier and enjoyable environment to work in over the weekend. The convention is fairly small, but there are a good mix of international and local artists; John Montgomery has made the trip from California, there are a good selection of artists from Australia including Lucky Diamond Rich, Ali Manners, the guys at Chapel tattoo and Lust for Life, which has recently opened in Brisbane. Aucklands own Sacred Tattoo were very busy all weekend, as well as native, Sam Rulz, who has been very busy travelling the world since we caught up last. As usual it's the people I have never heard of before that blew me away – you should definitely check out Andy Swarlick from Christchurch as he was working some beautiful tattoos over the weekend. The main focus of the event however is to showcase traditional Maori tattooing and there are plenty of artists proudly doing it justice, both by hand and by machine.

I would like to say a big thank you to Pip and the crew for making us feel so welcome, and also to Brent Taylor who helped me out organising some guestspots and things to see. New Zealand is a beautiful country full of friendly people, who have a strong heritage in tattooing that is possibly one of the oldest in the world. The biggest tattoo show here is in New Plymouth and takes place in November 2012; the website is online and it's already looking like its going to be an amazing show, if you can make it over and experience this wonderful country its well worth the trip! My next stop is now a day away, when I will be jumping a plane to Singapore to check out the Asian infused tattoo art and work at Galaxy Tattoo in the vibrant Chinatown. Until next month...

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ONE MAN ARMY



Trent Aitken-Smith ✪ Guil Zekri

At the age of 18, Israeli-born Guil Zekri, left high school like every other kid of that age usually does. But then he did something very few 18-year-olds around the world do, he joined the army. Guil served as a Marine Paramedic in the Israeli Army, one of the world's toughest and most respected armies

Guil Zekri
Reinkarnation
Brüsselerstr. 17
50672 Cologne
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"I cannot say I enjoyed the army, but I don't regret it. My job in the army opened a door to work abroad and at one stage, I volunteered to go on a mission to Rwanda at the time of the massacre in 1995. I stayed there for some months as a paramedic in a field hospital. I was also in Goma, Congo, which was a very interesting experience that I think I have only just got over, ten years later. Coming back from the Congo, I decided that Israel was a bit too 'small' and I decided to go to the States. I spent a year in New York and Los Angeles."

So at the age of 22, and with three years of seeing some of the worst the world had to offer, and a year hanging in America, Guil, decided to head to Paris and study.

"School was too expensive in Israel, so Paris it was. I studied philosophy and art aesthetics where I got my bachelors plus two academic master years. That was an amazing time. I never learnt how to paint or to draw, during that time, but I learnt how to observe an art piece from all aspects."

I got into tattooing by accident really. I always had painted and had done music and art, or at least I thought that I was doing art! But anyway, I was always interested in art and music.

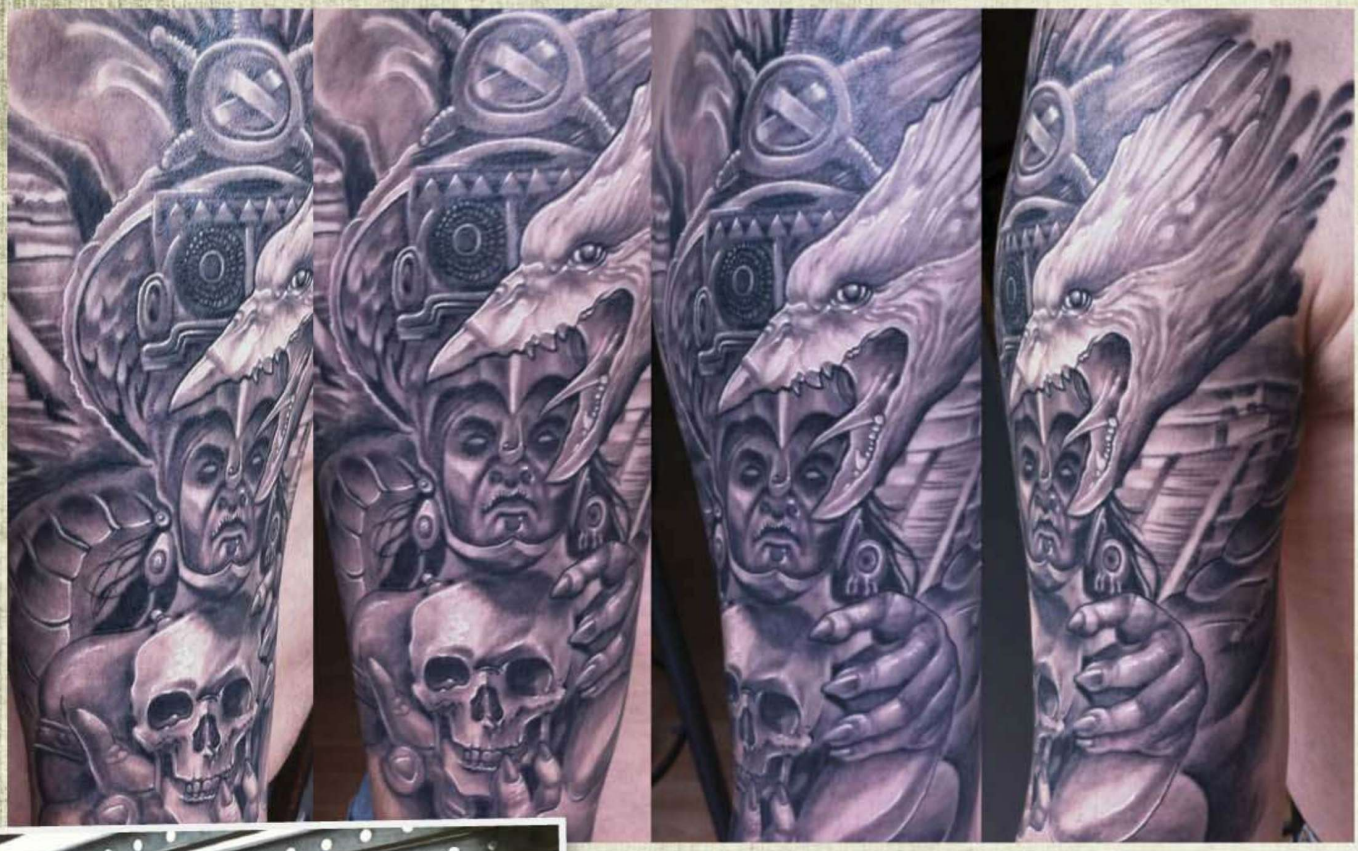
"I was 17 when I got my first tattoo. It is a piece based on the cover art of one of the albums by the band, Suffocation. It was originally painted by Dan Seagrave. I think that that was an important moment as I think that the tattooing influence started there. My second tattoo was also by Seagrave, but this time for the band, Obituary. The motives for the tattoos, don't really say anything, it was pure aesthetics, but the bands, I loved this type of music and love it still. And I got a lot more tattoos in the meantime.

"I was quite involved in the tattoo scene, but I had never really thought I could be a tattoo artist. I was also concentrating more on music at the time. I really wanted to be a death metal star! Maybe I just was not sure of myself enough to start tattooing. From Paris I went to Germany where I started tattooing in a small town called Munster. What a culture shock! I went to Germany because life in Paris was hard, with me having no job and

I WAS QUITE INVOLVED IN THE TATTOO SCENE, BUT I HAD NEVER REALLY THOUGHT I COULD BE A TATTOO ARTIST. I WAS ALSO CONCENTRATING MORE ON MUSIC AT THE TIME. I REALLY WANTED TO BE A DEATH METAL STAR!

IN THE ARMY NOW (PART I)

The Spartan Army was one of the earliest known professional armies. Boys were sent to a barracks at the age of seven to train for being a soldier. At the age of 30 they were released from the barracks and allowed to marry and have a family. After that, men devoted their lives to war until their retirement at the age of 60. Unlike other civilizations, whose armies had to disband during the planting and harvest seasons, the Spartan serfs or helots, did the manual labor. This allowed the Spartans to field a full-time army with a campaign season that lasted all year. The Spartan Army was largely composed of hoplites, equipped with arms and armour nearly identical to each other. Each hoplite bore the Spartan emblem and a scarlet uniform. The main pieces of this armor were a round shield, a spear and a helmet.





I REALLY TRY TO BE AS CREATIVE AS POSSIBLE, I NEVER REPEAT MY WORK AND I TRY TO WORK ON EVERY STYLE WHILE ADAPTING IT TO MY STYLE. I THINK THAT EVERY IDEA CAN BECOME A GREAT TATTOO, DEPENDING ON HOW YOU WORK THE THEME OUT

it is an expensive town. I found a job in a tattoo studio. It was not a real apprenticeship; the deal was drawing knowledge against tattoo knowledge and it worked. So the tattooing all began in Munster, eight-and-a-half years ago! I left Munster after ten months, moved to Cologne and worked there for three years, before opening my own tattoo studio, Reinkarnation, about four-and-a-half years ago."

Guil opened Reinkarnation with a business partner that he had met in Cologne and the studio quickly expanded, attracting more and more clients.

"We worked together for three years before we decided to open Reinkarnation. We were working in a small cellar shop for two years, but now we are in a bigger and much nicer studio, and we have three more artists working with us. The concept was very simple, try to do as many beautiful tattoos as possible. That was the central idea. I really try to be as creative as possible, I never repeat my work and I try to work on every style while adapting it to my style. I think that every idea can become a great tattoo, depending on how you work the theme out. Though I find the most interesting theme for me is the fantasy realistic stuff. That's how I

IN THE ARMY NOW (PART II)

In the earliest Middle Ages it was the obligation of every aristocrat to respond to the call to battle with his own equipment, archers, and infantry. This decentralized system was necessary due to the social order of the time, but could lead to motley forces with variable training, equipment and abilities. The more resources the noble had access to the better his troops would be.





work so it just fits my style across the two mediums.

"The studio provides all styles of tattoos and I enjoy the fact that the guys that work with me have different styles. This really moves tattooing forward for me. There are a lot of different perspectives to tattooing and the influence is mutual. We also have many guest artists in the studio and I find each one brings something new to learn with them. This is one of the things that I really enjoy in tattooing."



Guil's paintings are very dynamic, drawing the viewer in instantly. There is a mix of traditional schools of painting, along with his own influences, making for some brilliant surrealist images.

"Painting is very important for me in the moment. I have always painted. I paint with oil on canvas as I really enjoy the medium very much. My style is very baroque and I love the 15-17th century artists. I am very influenced by this period. I work on religious and figurative images and I like to give the viewer something to think about when they look at my paintings; like a small message hidden within. I really try to separate my painting from my tattoo work as they work in different ways for me. When I am painting, I am only with myself. I can allow myself the time to work with the material and pigments in layers, and the concept is mine only. Working in the tattoo medium, you share the process with your customer. I think that by separating the two mediums, the influence on each other is even stronger."

WHEN I DO OIL PAINTING, I USUALLY GET A CHANCE TO BE A BIT MORE FREE AND EXPRESS WHAT I WANT AND NOT WHAT A CUSTOMER WANTS





And not content with keeping his creative force within the visual arts, Guil is also expanding his output to music.

"At the moment I'm working on a debut album. I have a band called, The Living Room, and it's some kind of melancholic prog-rock. We will record the first album in February or March. I will be doing backing vocals, texts, bass, sitar and programing. We are aiming to

AT THE MOMENT I'M WORKING ON A DEBUT ALBUM. I HAVE A BAND CALLED, THE LIVING ROOM, AND IT'S SOME KIND OF MELANCHOLIC PROG-ROCK





IN THE ARMY NOW (PART III)

The Romans were also noted for making use of auxiliary troops, non-Romans who served with the legions and filled roles that the traditional Roman military could not fill effectively, such as light skirmish troops and heavy cavalry. After their service in the army they were made citizens of Rome and then their children were citizens also. They were also given land and money to settle in Rome. In the late Roman Empire, these auxiliary troops, along with foreign mercenaries, became the core of the Roman Army; moreover, by the time of the late Roman Empire, tribes such as the Visigoths were paid to serve as mercenaries.

try and get a nice organic sound."

With so much on the go, Guil seems to be keeping all his options open, while at the same time, making a mark on the tattooing world – something that seems quite easy to this man of many talents.

"My future plans are not 100 percent at the moment, but of course I will continue tattooing. Maybe one more artist will join us at the studio, we will see. I definitely want to paint more; I feel that my tattoos are somehow technically stronger than my paintings, and I would like to improve that. At the moment, I'm working on some sketches for a much more complicated series of paintings. I am really going to try to work a much bigger canvas and have many more figures in the scene. I am working around the idea of, 'David & Goliath', but with a surreal touch to it. I am really excited to take my work onto a new level.





AT THE MOMENT, I'M WORKING ON SOME SKETCHES FOR A MUCH MORE COMPLICATED SERIES OF PAINTING AROUND THE IDEA OF, 'DAVID & GOLIATH', BUT WITH A SURREAL TOUCH TO IT. I AM REALLY EXCITED TO TAKE MY WORK ONTO A NEW LEVEL

"I have also been thinking about maybe doing a book and some conventions are planned for the end of the year. So I definitely have a busy year planned for me. Like I said earlier, the band will be recording in February or March and we have already started to work on some new material for a second album, so I guess we will be looking forward to some concerts in spring as well."



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Tattoos & Tentacles

Sion Smith Julian Murray

Sometimes, the best ideas come out of nowhere, but as we shall see, that doesn't necessarily mean those ideas will come together very fast...

I've been following this project for some time now. It's genesis is well documented online and over the last couple of years, Tattoos & Tentacles has achieved no small amount of notoriety and fans – and rightly so. This coupling of non-related subjects is something more creatives should take note of, because when it comes to magazine copy, this sort of material is priceless!

Now, with enough time under the belt, this project had found its way into publication. Julian Murray has worked too long and too hard on this for it be swept under the carpet, so its perfect timing to catch up with him, find out how the hell he found himself in this place and publishing some of the great images they captured during its formation.

You've been working on this for a long time – in fact when I first caught wind of it, it looked like you had already been working on it for quite some time. How long have you really been working on it now?

"We started working on it as just a four image photography series back in 2008. My friend Jackie and I did the first shoot, along with a few others and they displayed on our website for almost a year with no thought to expand. At the top of 2010, after a move to Los Angeles, we started to pursue the series again as a creative outlet and it became, pretty much a full-time job.

"Over 70 shoots later, Tattoos & Tentacles was laid out and sent to the printer in book form in August of 2011. The book itself is a 12 inch, 144-page hardcover book. Lace hand drew the logo to make it look like a tattoo sketch, and picked out this material that makes the book feel like skin. Once a person has it in their hands, the feel alone is pretty impressive."



OCTOPUSSY (I)
Octopuses have two eyes and four pairs of arms, and like other cephalopods they are bilaterally symmetric. An octopus has a hard beak, with its mouth at the center point of the arms. Octopuses have no internal or external skeleton (although some species have a vestigial remnant of a shell inside their mantle), allowing them to squeeze through tight places. Octopuses are among the most intelligent and behaviorally flexible of all invertebrates.

How come you decided to self-publish? Did you ever try and figure out the traditional publishing route or was it much a case of you wanted control over the project and didn't want people who didn't know what they were talking about messing around with your stuff?

"We decided to self-publish right from the start. It was very important for us, not only to maintain complete creative control over the project, but as well, to have such an amazing accomplishment under our belts at such a young age. It's been a major investment; I don't think people realize. From concepting, shooting and buying props, to traveling, editing and straight up cash to market and print the finishing product. It's been a roller coaster, but we've met a lot of extraordinary people along the way and have such a stunning piece to show for it. Staying independent is giving us the chance to tour conventions this next year, and contemplate what's next. It's also opened up doors to new business opportunities and has recently led to our first sponsorship deal with Clique Vodka (www.cliquevodka.com, an up-and-coming premier vodka company off the east coast."

WE MOVED TO LOS ANGELES TO WORK WITH A COUPLE RECORD LABELS AND A HIP HOP MAGAZINE. JUST ABOUT EVERY PERSON WE MET WITH, TO SHOW OUR WORK, WOULD END UP TALKING ABOUT THE TATTOOS & TENTACLES PHOTOGRAPHS



There has to be a good story behind the idea for this. What happened? Was it accident or design or something else. Let's face it – it's not your everyday kind of project to start!

"Late 2008 my partner/fiance/ graphic design wizard was re-vamping our website and we were short one photography series. I had a couple new lighting techniques up my sleeve, so I decided to shoot Jackie again, along with three others. We didn't have a name for the series until we went through the photos and realized that all four models, coincidentally, had tattoos. Two bottles of wine and some conversations later, Tattoos & Tentacles was created. From there, the small series always seemed to catch people's attention, especially in Los Angeles. That sparked a thought to maybe trying and shoot a couple more images, but this time, be more creative with it, and that's exactly what we did."

Did you do one shoot and then figure it was great and hunt down more people to be involved, or after a couple of shoots, did the models start coming to you?

"After showcasing the small Tattoos & Tentacles series we had created on our website only, we started to get a lot of positive and intrigued feedback from everywhere. But still, the series sat, for a hot minute, until January of 2010 when we moved to Los Angeles to work with a couple record labels and a hip hop magazine. Just about every person we met with, to show our work, would end up talking about the Tattoos & Tentacles photographs. That's when the thought hit us, that maybe we should expand and build the project, try a couple more shoot, see what we could come up with. I put a few casting calls out online, being very clear as to what the shoot was and consisted of. Handfuls of replies came in and we shot five more models for the series. At that time, the book was a mere thought, but nothing had been determined, so we released all the images we had created and that's when people started to contact us non-stop, looking to be a part of it."

Are they real live Octopuses?

"Yes, all real, however, they are not alive. In the beginning, I thought it would be impossible to find any, but we quickly found out they are sold in almost any international market. More recently, we walked into a Rainbow Foods – a major chain grocery store in the midwest – and there were some deli section! Must be a new food craze or something... the markets sell them one by one; frozen.

"We only bought one at a time, depending on the shoots we had lined up. Lace would thaw out the octopus, wash and dry it, before and after all shoots. It's amazing how much moisture they constantly produce. None of the models had a problem working with an octopus; most thought it was pretty rad, especially the texture of them. I'm also not one of those photographers that feels the need to make a huge production of everything and over photograph, so we kept the shoots short and sweet, never lasting more than 15 minutes."

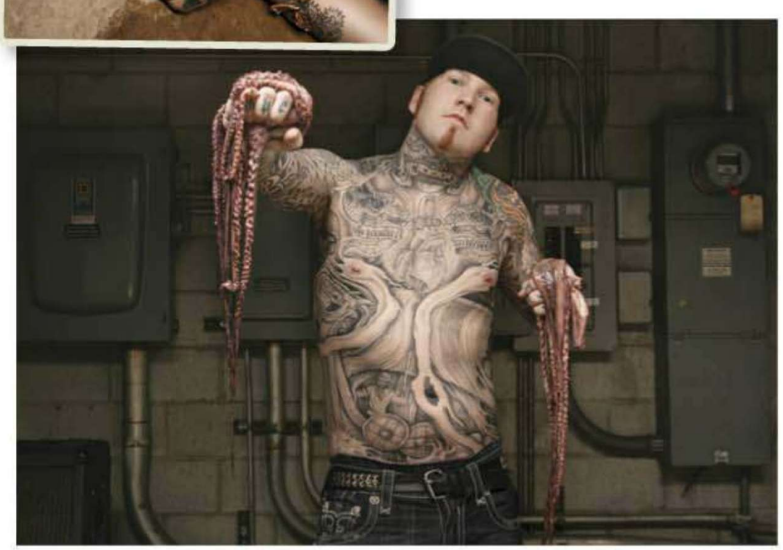
Did you find the 'quality control' hard to master – there's a lot in there that a lot of people might not really see. Great girls, great tattoos and a great set are not three easy things to get together all at the same time!

"Quality control was definitely a challenge. Organization is key. Never





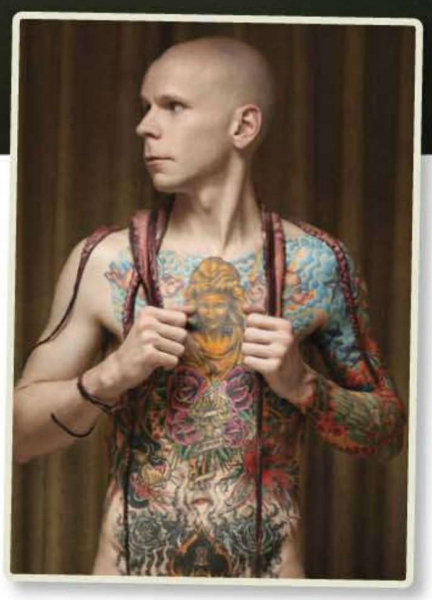
IT'S BEEN A ROLLER COASTER, BUT WE'VE MET A LOT OF EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE ALONG THE WAY AND HAVE SUCH A STUNNING PIECE TO SHOW FOR IT. STAYING INDEPENDENT IS GIVING US THE CHANCE TO TOUR CONVENTIONS THIS NEXT YEAR, AND CONTEMPLATE WHAT'S NEXT



OCTOPUSSY (II)
Octopuses are highly intelligent, likely more so than any other order of invertebrates. The exact extent of their intelligence and learning capability is much debated among biologists, but maze and problem-solving experiments (including predicting World Cup football results) have shown that they show evidence of a memory system that can store both short- and long-term memory. It is not known precisely what contribution learning makes to adult octopus behavior. Young octopuses learn almost no behaviors from their parents, with whom they have very little contact.


Beloved
Infidel





WE'RE OVERFLOWING WITH IDEAS AND THERE WERE SO MANY PEOPLE WITH STUNNING ARTWORK OVERSEAS THAT WE JUST COULDN'T GET TO! AS FOR NOW THOUGH, WE'VE ONLY HAD THE BOOK OUT FOR A FEW MONTHS, SO WE'RE TRYING TO ENJOY IT

any big issues. Each shoot had to be concepted and planned out. We had to make sure all contracts were in place, that every model was comfortable. Having such an overwhelming response of models wanting to be in it, we had to be selective. Also being mindful and considerate of what we could do within our budget, since we were putting every dollar of our income towards the project. We were constantly writing out different ideas and concepts for the series. Some shoots went super smooth and others we just had to show up and wing it. I like to think, as a team, Lace and I work well under pressure."

What else do you do? Is this your first project of this type or a sideline – and you can't possibly leave it there, can you? There must a volume 2 in the pipeline – or a different but similar off the wall project.

"I've been doing photography for almost six years now, with an emphasis on music and portrait work.

"This is our first giant project. Before creating Tattoos & Tentacles, I had never been involved in the tattoo culture; I don't even have any tattoos myself! I think a lot of people that see this project are expecting Lace and I to be a completely alternative duo. The whole experience has been pretty awesome. My favorite thing about photography, no matter what the subject matter, is being able to come in and learn about different people. From doing this book we've met some extraordinary individuals, gained a lot of knowledge and respect for the tattoo culture and artists, and even made some great friends along the way. Whether people love or absolutely hate the book, we still got a lot out of it personally. It has paved us another avenue as being self-published artists.

"Lace and I joke around about if we did get an offer to sign on with another publisher, we would do a Tattoos and Tentacles Vol.2: Europe Edition. We're overflowing with ideas and there were so many people with stunning artwork overseas that we just couldn't get to! As for now though, we've only had the book out for a few months, so we're trying to enjoy it. This project has really opened my eyes, in the sense of doing photography as more of an art form, instead of always, only being hired as a portrait photographer. With that said we have a couple new ventures and merchandise ideas we're nursing at the moment (non-tentacle related) and look forward to releasing them!"

Tattoos & Tentacles can be purchased at *www.tattoosandtentacles.com* along with other prints as well.

OCTOPUSSY (III)
The Giant Pacific Octopus, Enteroctopus dofleini, is often cited as the largest octopus species. Adults usually weigh around 15 kg (33 lb), with an arm span of up to 4.3 m (14 ft). The largest specimen of this species to be scientifically documented was an animal with a live mass of 71 kg (156.5 lb). The alternative contender is the Seven-arm Octopus, Haliphron atlanticus, based on a 61 kg (134 lb) carcass estimated to have a live mass of 75 kg (165 lb). However, there are a number of questionable size records that would suggest E. dofleini is the largest of all octopus species by a considerable margin; one such record is of a specimen weighing 272 kg (600 lb) and having an arm span of 9 m (30 ft).

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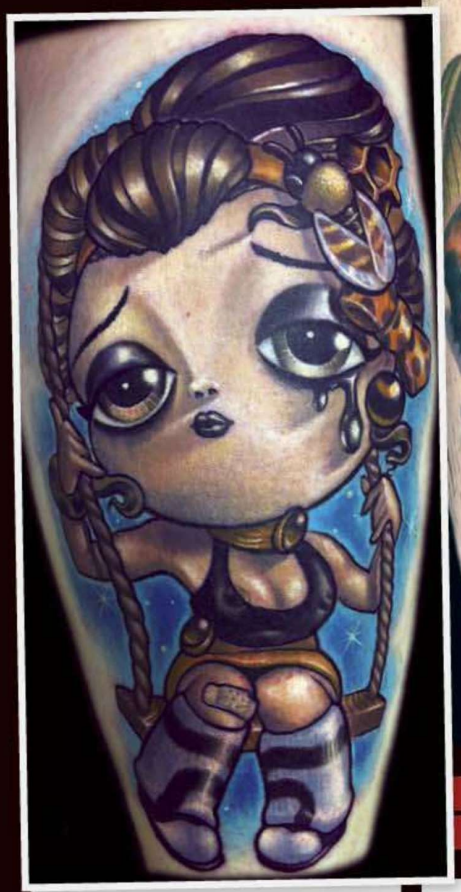
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We thought this might be an interesting chain of events – getting Jesse Smith to sit down with friend and protégé, Tanane Whitfield, and put the thumbscrews on him about his work, his art, and a few other things as well. In all its scatterbrained glory, here's the results of our little experiment



YOU'VE ONLY BEEN TATTOOING THREE YEARS?! IT'S PRETTY IMPRESSIVE HOW QUICK YOU'VE PICKED IT UP.
Yes. Three very inspiring years! I had four mentors who taught me for two years then you kinda just took me under your wing as a friend/mentor. Thanks for the assist, homie.

WHAT DID YOU DO BEFORE YOU BECAME A TATTOO ARTIST?
I had a freelance gig making signs for a local meat market for about a year. $10 per sign, I was ballin', yo! Then I started masonry work and did that for roughly four-and-a-half years before I landed my apprenticeship.





THE 'NINJA' RUMOURS STARTED SPREADING WHEN CERTAIN PEOPLE SAW A PHOTO OF ME DOING PUSH-UPS ON MY THUMBS

WHEN DID YOU START YOUR APPRENTICESHIP AND WHO WAS IT UNDER?
I apprenticed under Cliff Evans, Bennet Edwards, Dave Lukeson, Sean Karn and of course, Gabriel Cece.

HOW DO YOU LIKE WORKING FOR GABRIEL CECE?
It's not even like that. I work WITH him. He's my mentor, co-worker and best friend. We argue a lot about shit that doesn't even matter. Not because we're actually mad. Just because it's how we talk.

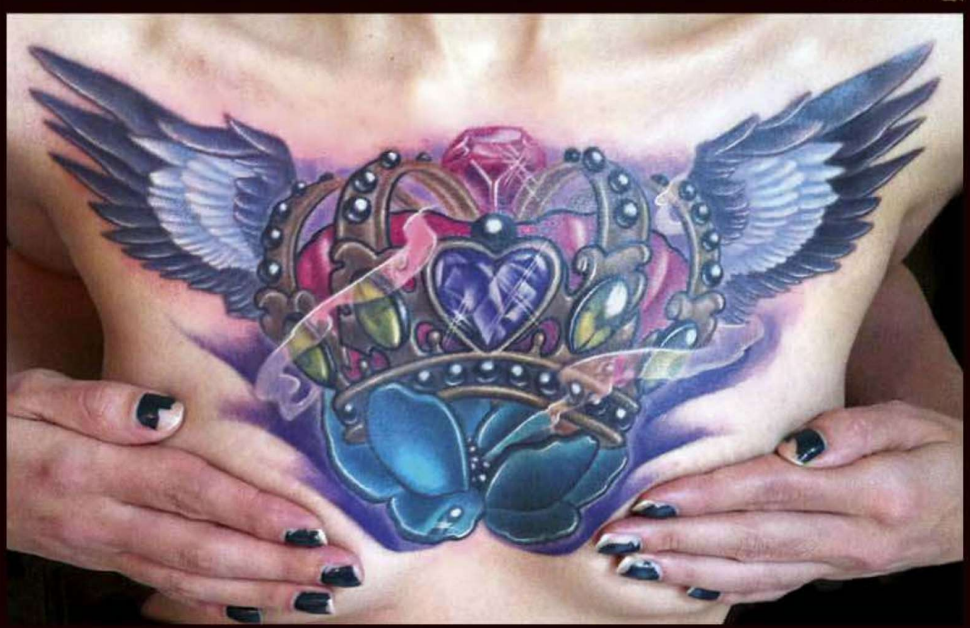
SO WHO WERE YOUR EARLY INFLUENCES AS AN ARTIST?
Art-wise, J. Scott Campbell and Humberto Ramos. I read a lot of comics, but those two always stood out to me. Tattoo-wise, Gabriel Cece was a huge influence on the way I go about tattooing now. Later on, I ended up meeting you and that changed my skillset completely; I could also credit Taylor Cort, Brian Hampton, Timmy B, Kyle Cotterman and Cecil Porter for bits and pieces of my 'style' now.

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD HAVE DONE WITH YOURSELF IF YOU HADN'T FOUND YOUR WAY INTO THE TATTOOING WORLD?
To be honest, I haven't a clue. Probably still laying block and brick and hating life. It was a real dead end. Tattooing gave me a more meaningful purpose.

WHAT OTHER INTERESTS DO YOU PURSUE IN YOUR FREE TIME BEYOND TATTOOING? I HEARD YOU WERE A NINJA, IS THAT TRUE?
Ninja?! Monk if anything. I was trained in Shaolin kung fu for a few years and train alone now. The 'ninja' rumours started spreading when certain people saw a photo of me doing push-ups on my thumbs.

SO DO YOU FOLLOW ANY WEIRD DIETS OR EAT

VITAL STATISTICS
Name: Tanane Whitfield.
Age: 28
Tattooing since: 2008
Studio: Studio Evolve Tattoo
Location: 512 S. Independence Blvd. Virginia Beach, VA. 23452
Married: Yep!
Children: Amara (7) Leannah (6) Aubrey (3)
Religion: 'My god has a hammer'



WHATEVER YOU WANT?
I'm not a picky eater. I try to watch what I eat but I really don't have a strict diet. I do eat tuna about four or five times a week.

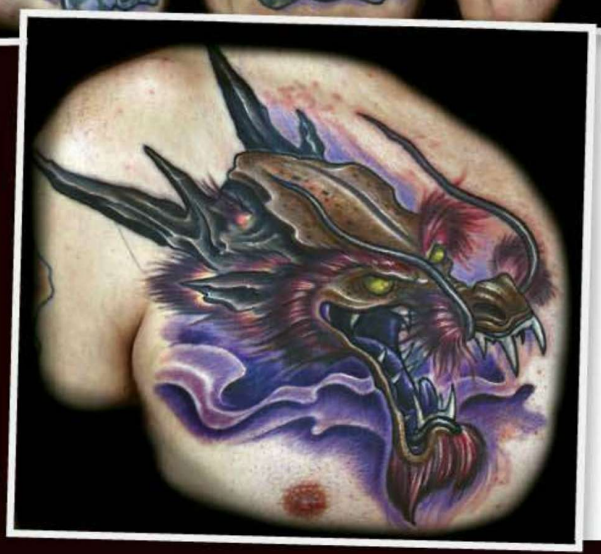
YOU KNOW THAT SHIT'S SUPER HIGH IN MERCURY, RIGHT?
I'm immune to the hazards of 'mercury'.

I ALSO HEARD YOU ONCE THREATENED TO KILL SOMEONE FOR RIPPING OFF A TATTOO. IS THAT TRUE AND WOULD YOU HAVE USED SOME OF YOUR KUNG FU TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH IT?
I didn't threaten to kill 'em! He stole your shit and it pissed me off. I really don't get why people feel the need to steal other's hard work. If you enjoy someone's work, just tell 'em. Don't go reproducing custom tattoos that are designed for a client. It's wrong and the original artist will more than likely



I'M IMMUNE TO THE HAZARDS OF 'MERCURY'













always find out. I've been tagged to photos on Facebook that I didn't even do. It fucking drives me up the wall! STOP STEALING OR ME AND JESSE WILL COME AND KILL YOU!

OK, HOW MANY TATTOO CONVENTIONS AND/OR GUEST SPOTS DO YOU WORK EACH YEAR?
This past year, I did five US conventions and two UK conventions, plus two guest spots at Thou Art in Sheffield.

WHICH ONES ARE YOUR FAVOURITES?
Jesse... are you winking at me in front of all these fine people? <smacks wrist> I had an awesome time at the Hampton, VA Convention, and then I did Liverpool. Awesome show in a really cool hotel! Got to booth with my homie, Kyle Cotterman, and I met a ton of awesome people and tattooers. After that, I did Tattoo Jam – the Jam is epic. A huge show with tons of artists! Finally, Tattoo Paradise Gathering. On my first time there I got to meet [street artist and surrealist painter] Greg 'Craola' Simkins! He's always been a major influence for me and I got to draw with him for a couple of hours then got to learn how to paint from his seminar!

IF YOU ENJOY SOMEONE'S WORK, JUST TELL 'EM. DON'T GO REPRODUCING CUSTOM TATTOOS THAT ARE DESIGNED FOR A CLIENT. IT'S WRONG AND THE ORIGINAL ARTIST WILL MORE THAN LIKELY ALWAYS FIND OUT



DO YOU THINK TATTOOING HAS PEAKED IN POPULARITY OR DO YOU THINK WE STILL HAVE A WAY TO GO?
I still think there's some ways to go. When I go to pick my daughter up from school and her teacher has a full sleeve from Gogue, then it's hit its peak.

IF YOU HAD TO NAME THREE PEOPLE THAT YOU'D LOVE TO GET TATTOOED BY, WHO WOULD THEY BE, AND WHY?
Josh Duffy. I love his work and I'm wanting to get a large torso piece from him one day. Kyle Cotterman, because I want large portraits of my daughters on my left leg and I've known him for so long it's a no-brainer. And Jesse Smith, because I love forcing you to do black and grey. Plus, I feel special because you'll actually tattoo me knowing colour is out of the equation. Ha!

ART AND THE ARTISTS

It's not all needles this, conventions that. Our boys also touched on art away from the tattoo studio...

If you could afford to buy a painting from any three artists who would they be and why?
All three would be commissioned pieces from Craola. So if you wanna get me an early Christmas gift...

Greg is definitely an amazing artist/person, but there's got to be at least two other artists out there that you'd like a piece of work by!
Fine, do a collaboration with Greg and I'll frame it and keep it.

Whose artwork graces the walls of your house/studio?
A dragon skull by Jeff Gogue, a portrait of my wife by Ian Mckown, several of your prints, Craola's red cardinal print, a portrait of Amy Winehouse by Sean Karn, a Baboon Speaker by Brian Hampton, a sketch by Taylor Cort, a custom machine by Jake Schroeder, a skull from Marcus Maquire and another skull from Taylor again. Where are my Jesse Smith originals you might ask? Good question, homie! Why don't I have an original yet? We go way back like car seats!

You've never asked me for one! Now, do you consider yourself an artist who does tattoos or a tattooist who does art?
Well, I was creating art well before tattooing so I gotta go with an artist doing tattoos. Tattooing has definitely expanded my utility belt though: I'm primarily a colour pencil kinda fellow but since that Craola seminar at the Paradise Gathering, I'm really enjoying acrylic painting. I've recently picked up Bic pen art as well!

I heard you have a solo show coming up in the next six months... <winks at Tanane>
Oh yeah! I'm doing this nifty art show at Jesse Smith's Loose Screw Tattoo. <winks back at Jesse> It's in Richmond Virginia. There will be pieces I've been working on that I haven't and won't digitally post. The body of work will consist of fully rendered colour pencil work, acrylic paintings and Bic pen art. I won't be straying from the norm. Expect absurd creatures that haunt the inner workings of my brain.

Do you feel as though art created with certain mediums commands a higher price tag because of its difficulty to apply, archival value, and the overall look it achieves?
Not at all. If the work is good, it's all the same in my eyes. If you decided to paint in poop, I'd buy it.





AND JESSE SMITH, BECAUSE I LOVE FORCING YOU TO DO BLACK AND GREY. PLUS, I FEEL SPECIAL BECAUSE YOU'LL ACTUALLY TATTOO ME KNOWING COLOUR IS OUT OF THE EQUATION



YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO GIVE ME A LIGHTER AREA NEXT TIME, YOUR NECK IS DARKER THEN THE INK I WAS USING AT THE TIME. <LAUGHS>
That's racist, Jesse.

SOMEONE TOLD ME THE OTHER DAY THAT YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T TATTOO THEM BECAUSE THEY WERE BLACK, IS THAT TRUE?
Half true. One: I don't remember that. Two: sounds like something I'd say due to the fact that I'm openly black and it sounds funny.

HOW DO YOU NORMALLY PICK YOUR CLIENTS THOUGH?
Usually, I can picture what they want as soon as they tell me their idea. I don't turn down much, but I am selective these days. If it's something I don't feel right for, I help them find someone better suited.

AND HOW LONG IS YOUR WAITING LIST NOW?
Before, I was never booked out past two or three weeks. Now, thanks to Skin Deep, I'm booked out for five months. I don't have a free Saturday 'til June! Thanks homies! [We try! – Ed]

THAT HAS TO BE A PRETTY AMAZING FEELING KNOWING THAT SO MANY PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO GET TATTOOED BY YOU. HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT JUGGLING THAT MANY CLIENTS?
I just take it as it comes. Our front desk girls handle the bulk of my bookings, but I handle the convention clients personally.



TRAUMATIC TATTOOS

At one point, talk turns to memorable tattoo moments. Tanane has had a few, including tattooing 'Tanane' on his sister's wrist ("wasn't for me though, my nephew has my name"), but one stands out a few more than others...

"I tattooed an older woman on her hip. Or, at least that's what the paperwork said when I grabbed it. She swiftly switched that location to right above her [insert suitable polite word for intimate female body part here]! I had to shave all that silver hair and when I was done she says, 'Thank you! I haven't had a man between my legs in ten years!' Why me? Why me!"





I DON'T TURN DOWN MUCH, BUT I AM SELECTIVE THESE DAYS. IF IT'S SOMETHING I DON'T FEEL RIGHT FOR, I HELP THEM FIND SOMEONE BETTER SUITED

THE FIRST TATTOO
Tanane got his first tattoo at 18. "There was no real reason why I waited that long. I happened to come across a dude who'd trade for a few drawings, and I got a 'Life/Death' ambigram on my left forearm à la Method Man. I was a huge Wu Tang Clan fan. Don't judge me!"



HOW DO YOU MANAGE YOUR TIME?
I manage absolutely nothing! I wing the majority of things I have to get done. At work, I usually do two appointments per day. Every once in a while, I have certain clients book all-day appointments.

HOW MANY DAYS A WEEK DO YOU TATTOO? HOW MANY HOURS DO YOU TATTOO IN EACH OF THOSE DAYS?
I currently work four and a half days: Wednesday-Saturday, 11am-10pm; then Monday, 11am-3:30pm. I take breaks almost every hour to have a smoke or eat, but I'm tattooing the bulk of my shifts.

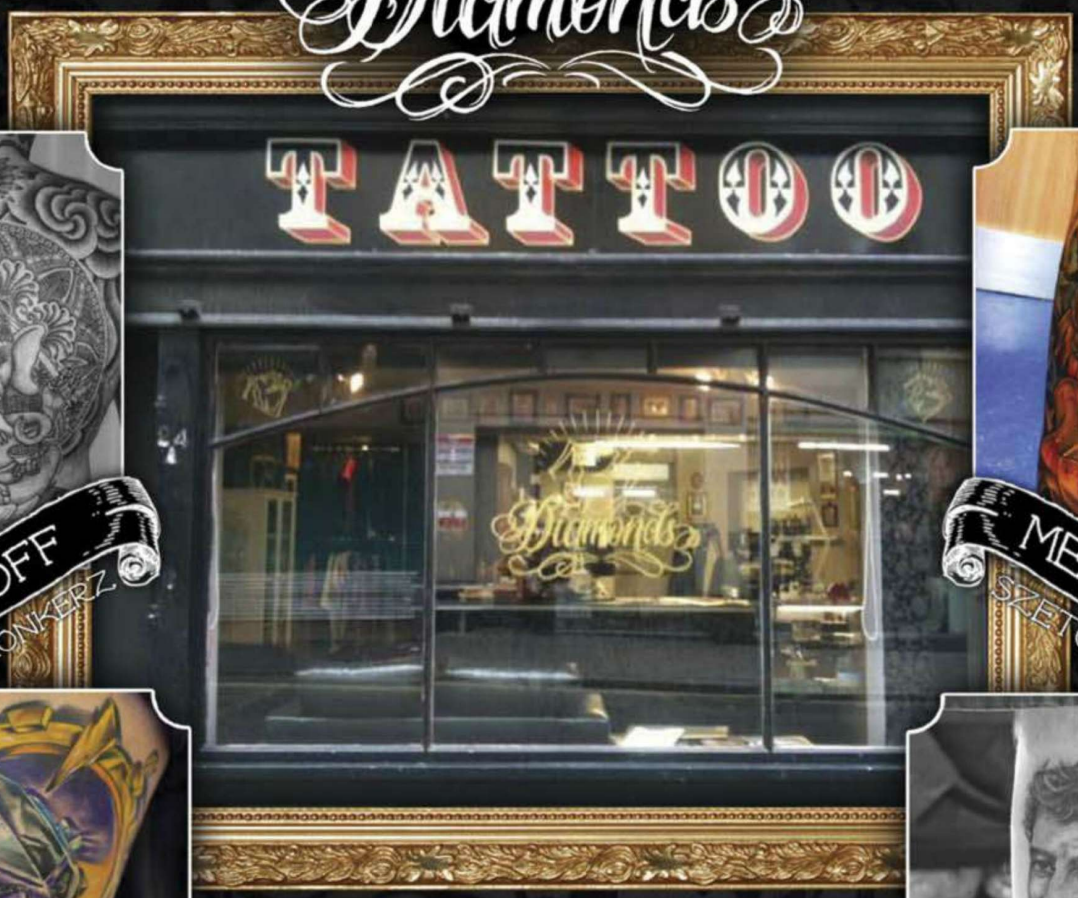
AND IS IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO FOCUS ON ONE PROJECT KNOWING THAT YOU HAVE A TON WAITING TO BE WORKED ON?
I just look at it as a reunion. I'll start a piece and revisit it again in a month. I'd prefer to give it three weeks, but you have to allow time for healing.

FINALLY, HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE THE BEST BLACK TATTOO ARTIST IN THE WORLD?
Am I? I'm feeling a bit hungry, actually. I'm off to the pancake house...





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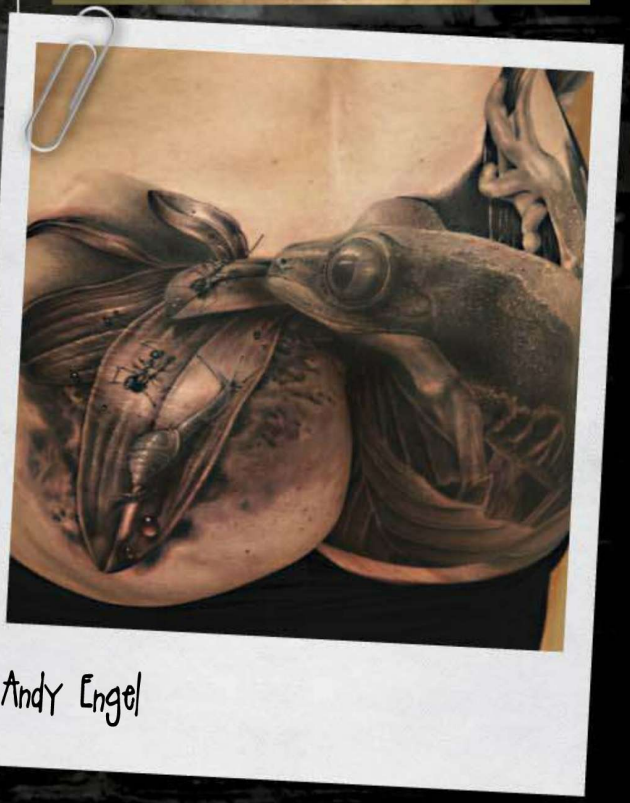
MARK BESTER



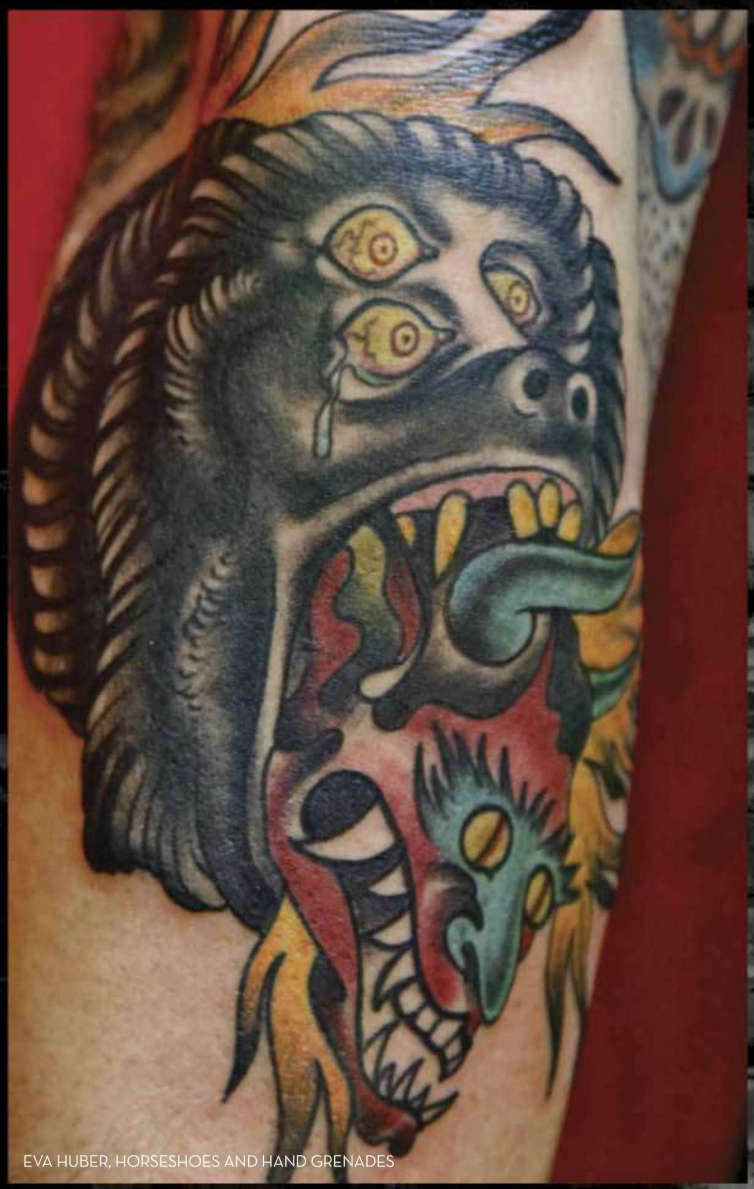
BLACK BIRD



ANDY ENGEL



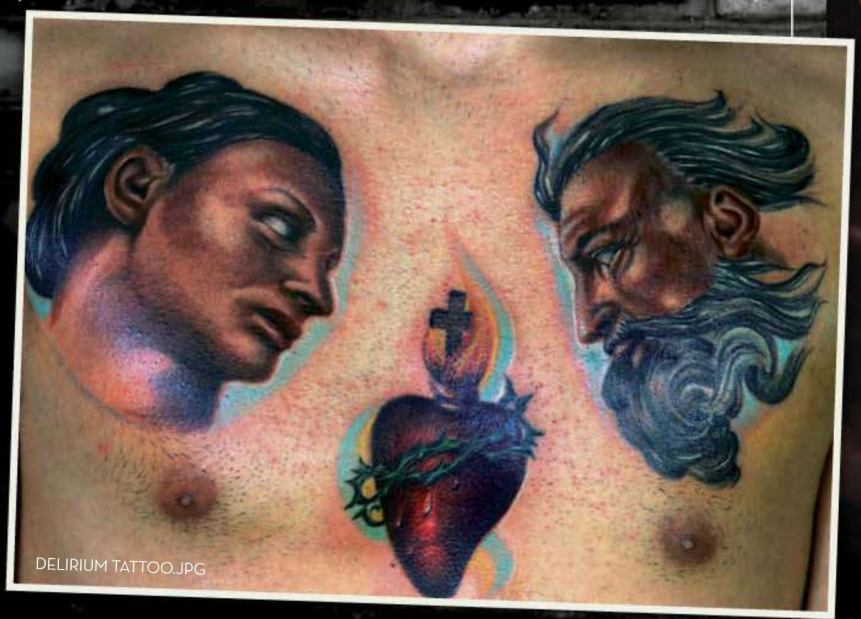
Andy Engel



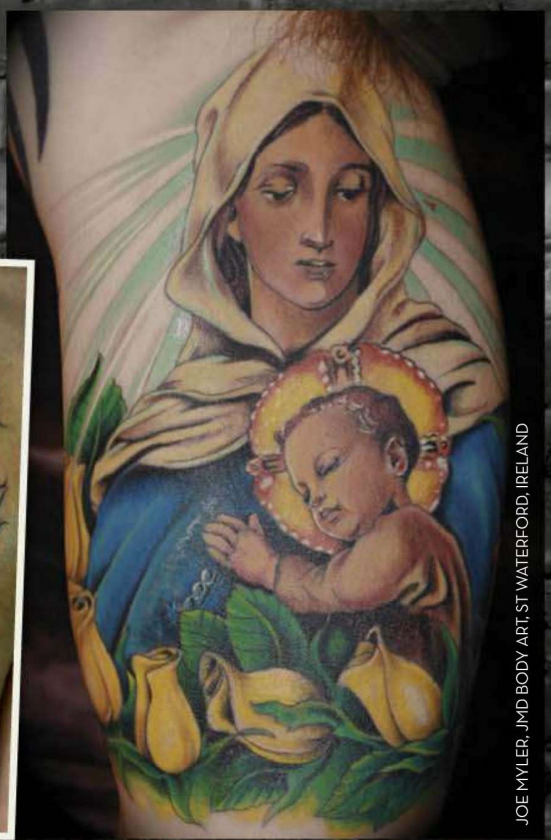
EVA HUBER, HORSESHOES AND HAND GRENADES



MAURO TAMPIERI, SKINWEAR, ITALY



DELIRIUM TATTOO.JPG



JOE MYLER, JMD BODY ART, ST WATERFORD, IRELAND



JAVIER EASTMAN



PHILLIP SPEARMAN



JOE MYLER, JMD BODY ART, ST WATERFORD, IRELAND



KOSA, ART-LINE, RYBNIK, POLAND



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MITCH, INSPIRATIONS



CESAR DE CESARO, BODY GARDEN TATTOO, BIRMINGHAM



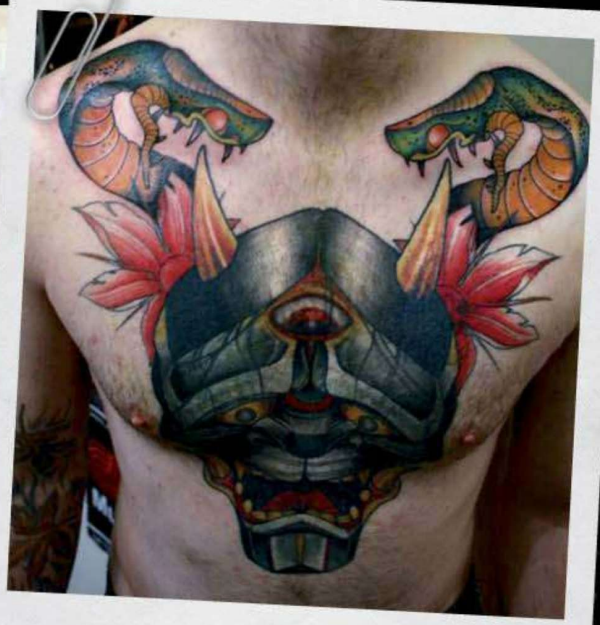
LEIGH OLDCORN, COSMIC TATTOO, COLCHESTER



HENRIK GALLON, GALLON TATTOOS.JPG



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JACK GALLOWTREE, DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR TATTOO STUDIO, SAN JOSE



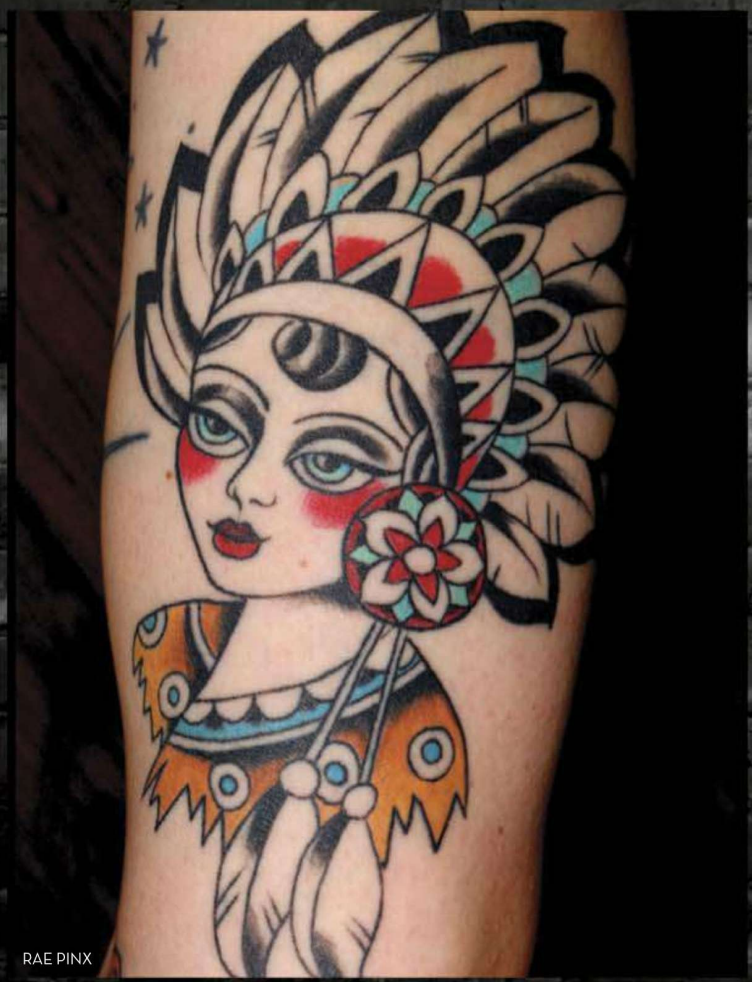
STADEMONIA TATTOO Y PIERCING, BARCELONA



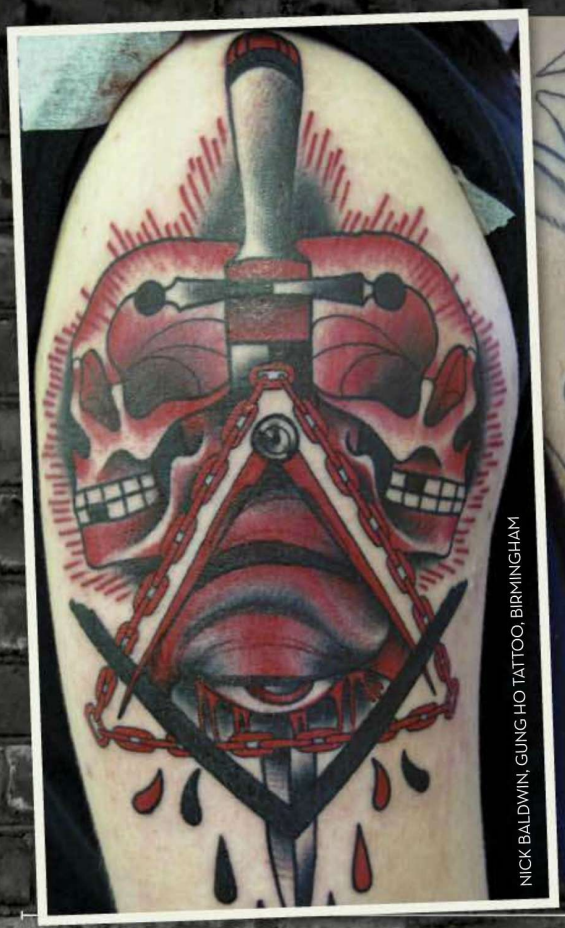
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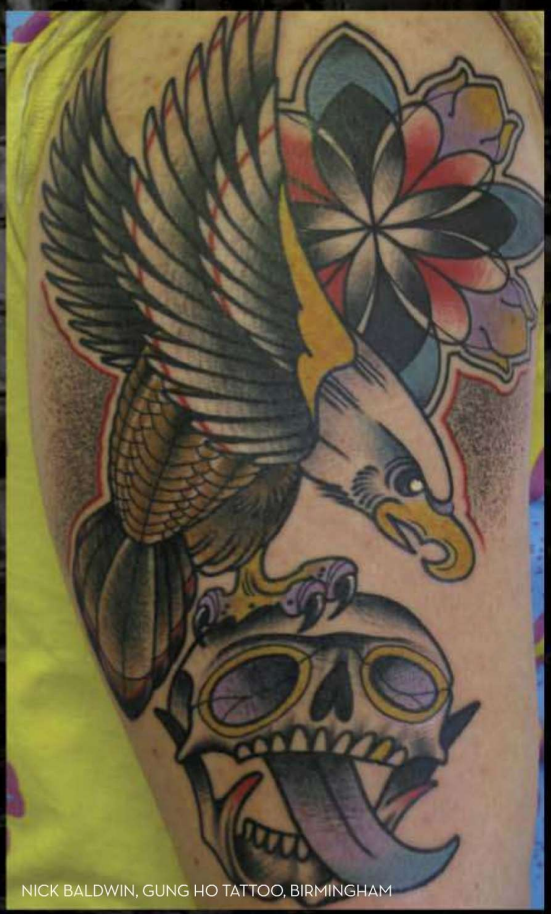
MARTIN BINCZEWSKI, AVON TATTOOS, BRISTOL



KAROLY "CHARLIE" GODO, HUNGARY



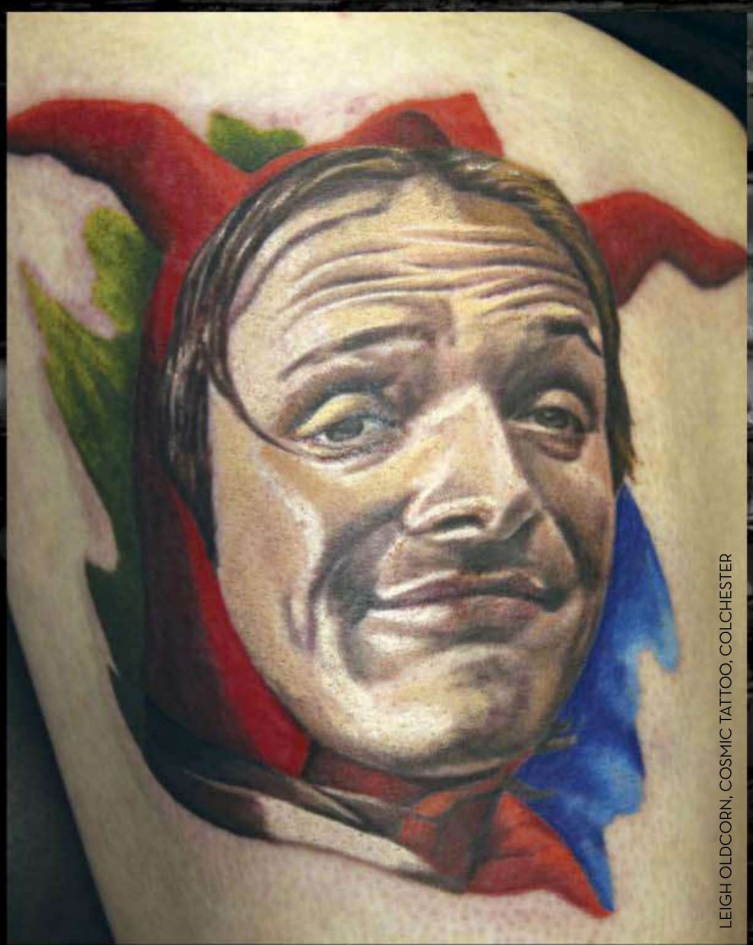
JOE BASS, THE JADE MERMAID TATTOO PARLOR, PORTLAND



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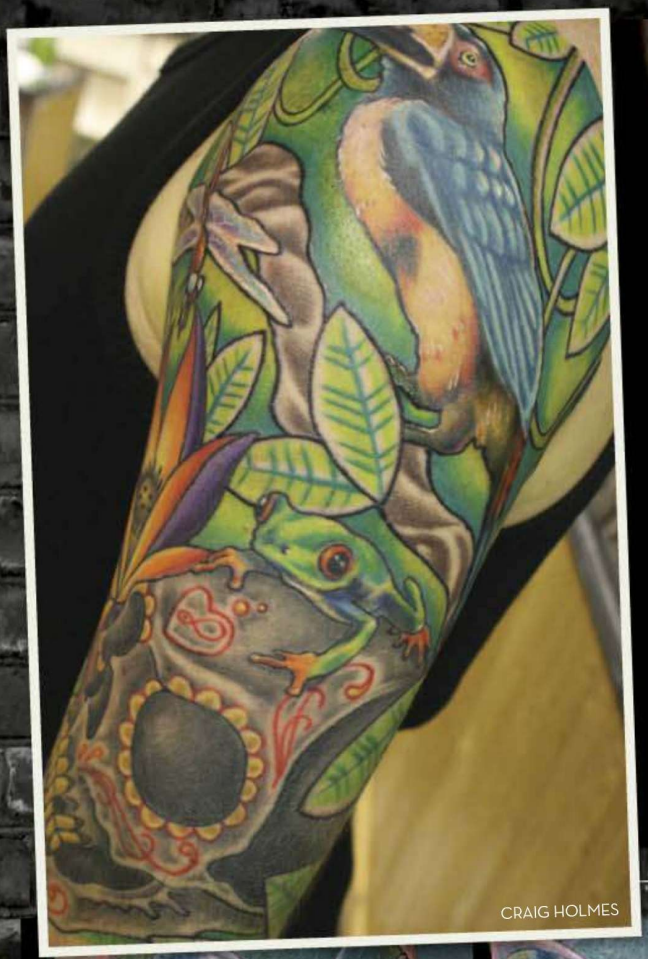
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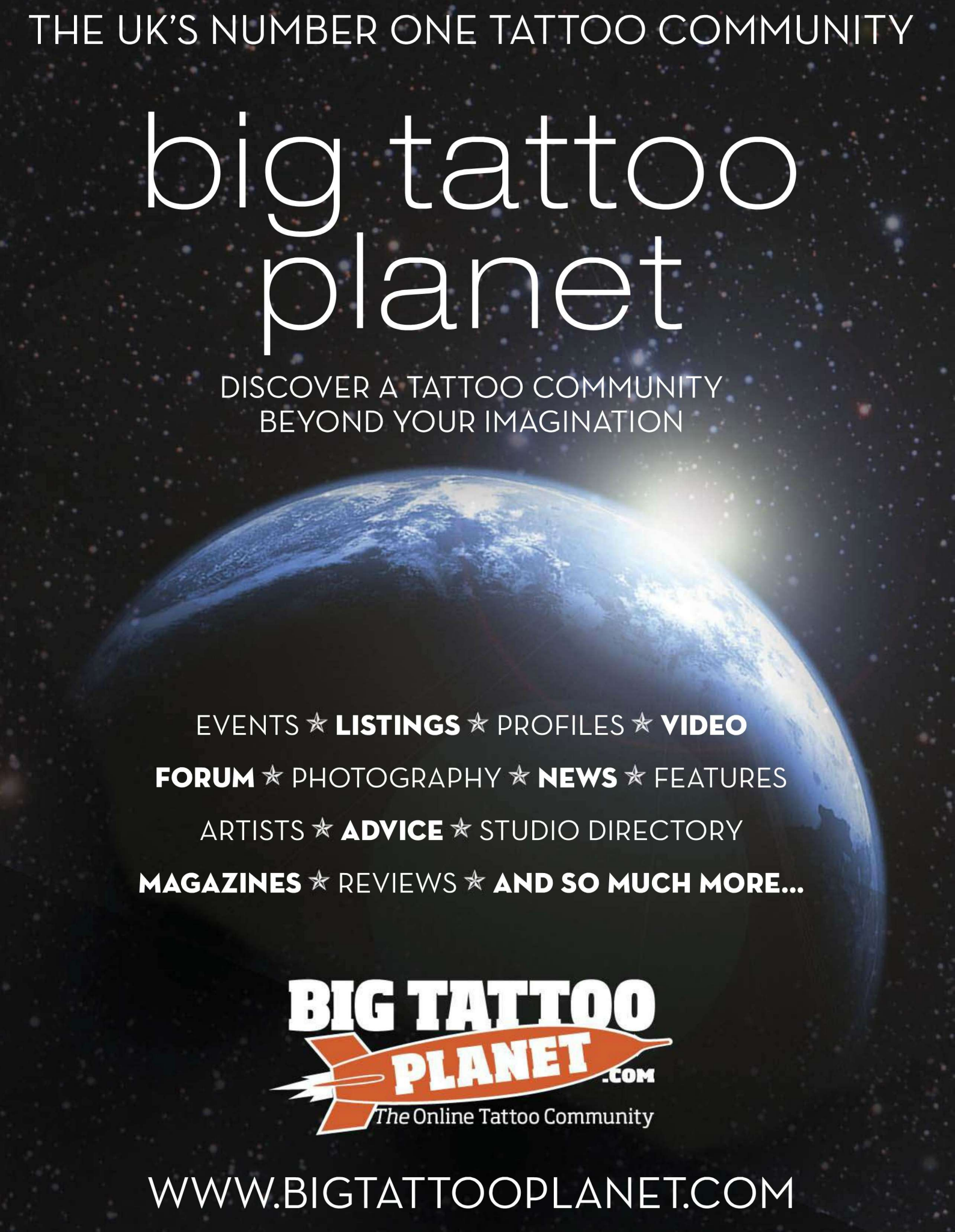


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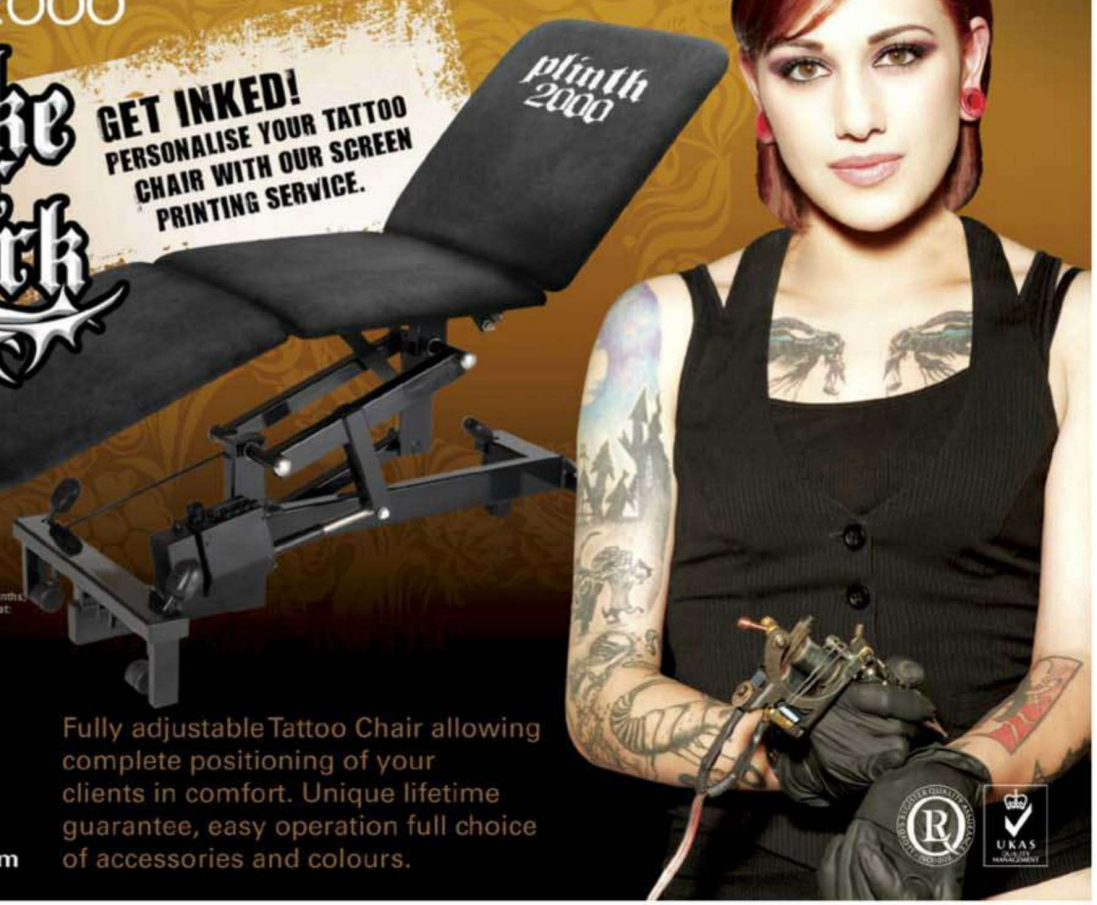
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THE HIEROPHANT

Rome: the world capital of Catholicism where mysticism doesn't hang around the neck of believers, Diego Brandi carves it into his customers' skin. A product of the new generation of Italian tattoo artists, Brandi likes to give birth to strange monsters and animals. Fantasy, imposing monsters and eerie icons… prepare to be submersed into some serious old-school mysticism



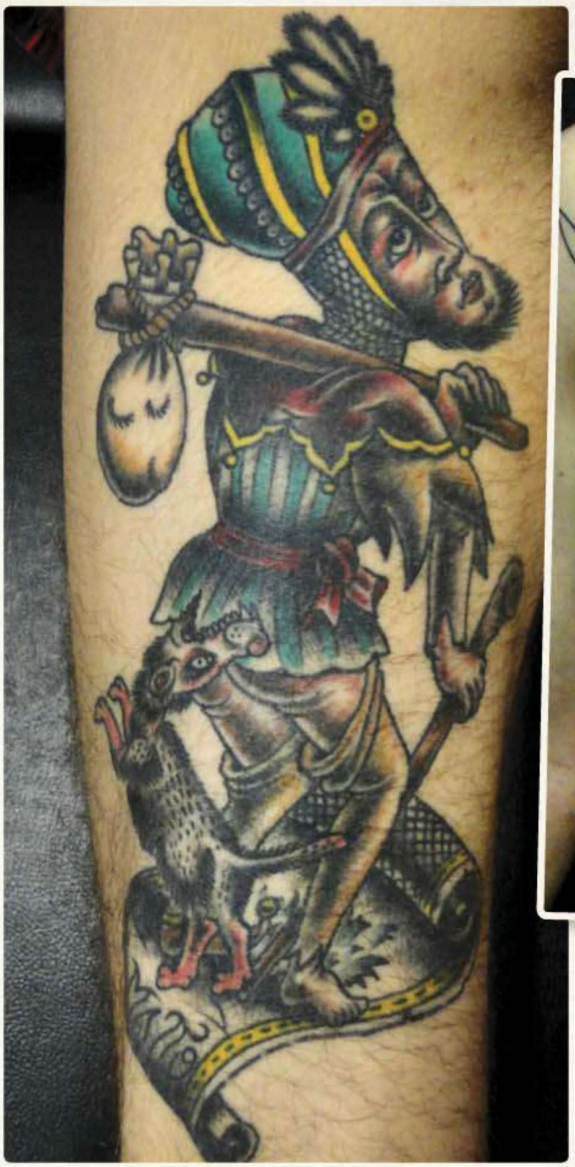
Pascal Bagot ◘ Diego Brandi

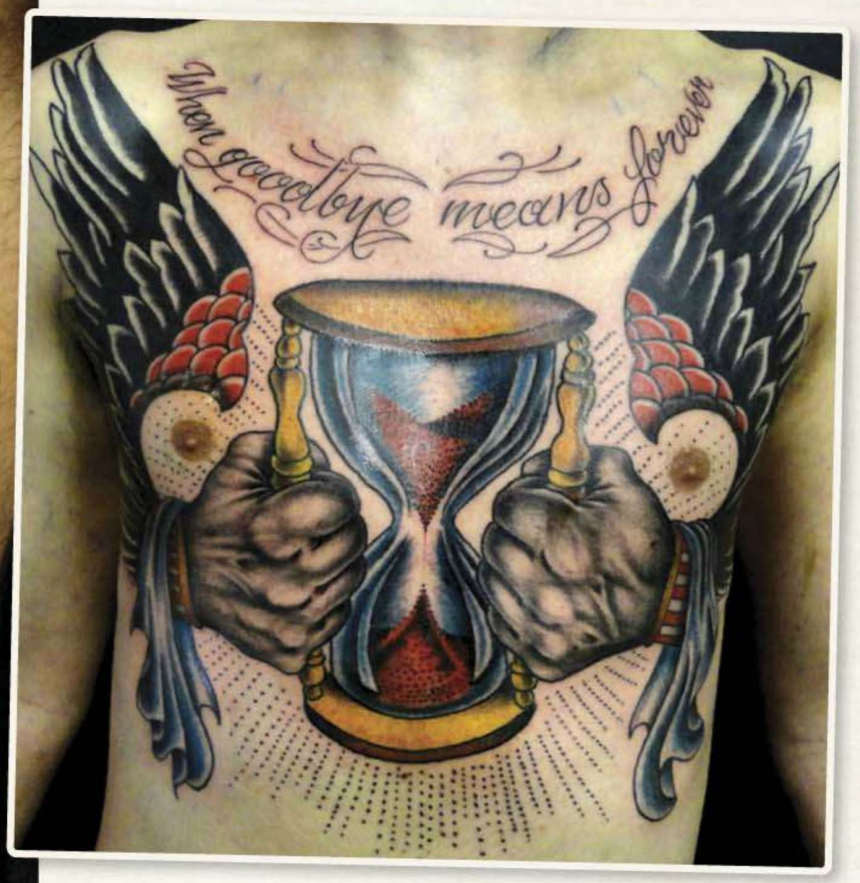


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I got my first tattoo when I was 13, a tribal, to be cooler than the other guys at school! I wanted to learn more but I was too young and there were only a really few studios at that time, around 20 maybe. When you compare today, it's really crazy. In Rome there are actually more than 200 studios now. Anyway, when I was a teenager I was used to hanging around in the studio of Gippi Rondinella in Campo di Formio – even if he didn't like it that much.

It was really hard to get a machine man, the only two Italian distributors were in the north of the country. My first machine; a friend taught me how to build a jail-machine that I started tattooing with. After I could get a real kit for tattooing in 2000, I was taken in as an apprentice in a studio in Rome. I stayed there two years where I learnt everything, even how to solder needles… I don't regret that, even if today you can easily find





AS A TATTOO ARTIST, YOU SPEND ALL YOUR TIME BRINGING PAIN TO PEOPLE SO I GUESS THAT IF YOU BELIEVE IN KARMA THERE'S NOTHING GOOD YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ANY OTHER LIFE AFTER THIS!

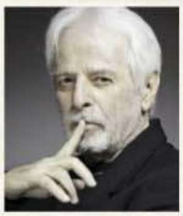
some ready to use kits where you don't have to worry about that type of work, knowing that is somehow being part of the craft of the profession.

Being a tattoo artist, for me, means being part of a period of history that started more than 2,000 years ago, when cavemen were getting tattooed to protect themselves from animals. It has some drawbacks; as a tattoo artist, you spend all your time bringing pain to people so I guess that if you believe in karma there's nothing good you can expect from any other life after this! Anyway, I try to be sincere through what I do.

WOULD YOU CARE TO ELABORATE ON THAT LAST COMMENT?

It is my responsibility to conserve our heritage to allow people in 20 years to be able to convey the meanings of the designs. If you want to reproduce it correctly, you need references. I





SHEER GENIUS (I)
Alejandro Jodorowsky spent almost a decade reconstructing the original form of the Tarot de Marseille. From this work he moved in to more therapeutic work in three areas: psychomagic, psychogenealogy and initiatic massage. Psychomagic aims to heal psychological wounds suffered in life. This therapy is based on the belief that the performance of certain acts can directly act upon the unconscious mind, releasing it from a series of traumas, some of which are passed down from generation to generation. Psychogenealogy includes the studying of the patient's personality and family tree in order to best address their specific sources. It is similar, in its phenomenological approach to genealogy, to the Constellations pioneered by Bert Hellinger.







ALL THE SIGNS IN THE WORLD ARE CONNECTED BECAUSE PEOPLE TRADE MEANINGS WHILE TRAVELLING AND CREATED A NEW LANGUAGE – AND I LIKE THIS IDEA OF BRINGING SOME MAGIC TO MY TATTOOS THAT COULD MAYBE ALSO CHANGE A LIFE

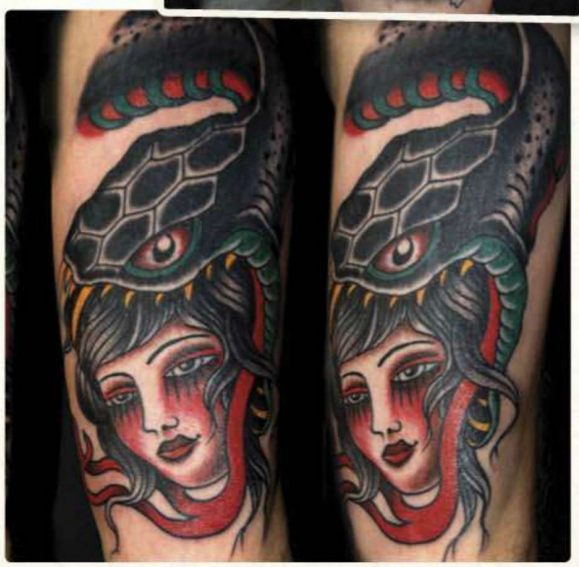
SHEER GENIUS (II)
Jodorowsky has several books on his therapeutic methods, including Psicomagia: La trampa sagrada (Psychomagic: The Sacred Trap) and his autobiography La danza de la realidad (The Dance of Reality), which he's filming as a feature-length film in March 2012. To date he has published over 23 novels and philosophical treaties, along with dozens of articles and interviews. His books are widely read in Spanish and French, but are for the most part unknown to English-speaking audiences.

learn from books. Last week I spent over €700 Euros on books from California and Japan. That is what I want to give to my customers: a library which they have come to find. It's possible to say exactly the same thing in at least 10,000 different ways, so it's important for me to broaden my customers' minds through my practice. I would like to create some kind of craft with people for whom the meaning of their tattoos is primordial. Even if I don't like this kind of secret society, I respect the taste for knowledge.

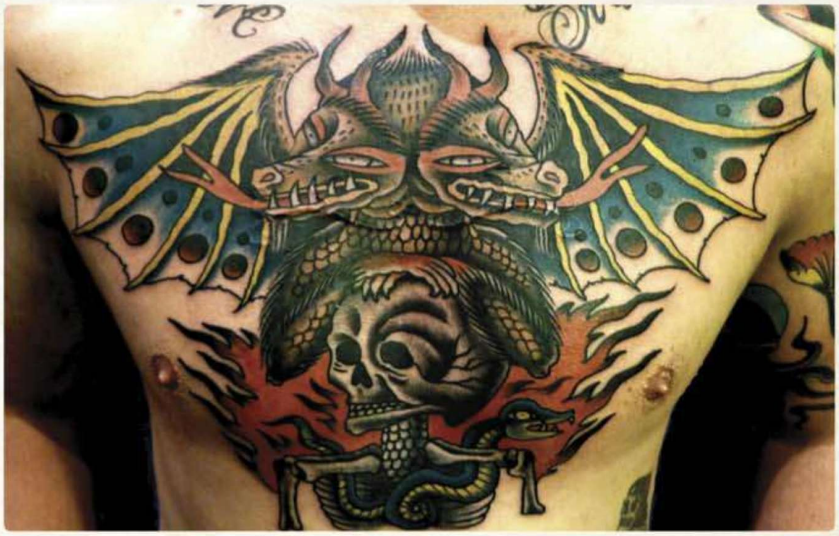
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HERE?
I opened my first studio seven years ago, but I moved here last year. I travelled a bit too. I worked at the Family Business studio with Mo Coppoletta in England. London is a great city, people are relaxed and very curious.

YOU WORK MAINLY USING AN OLD-SCHOOL STYLE. WHY?
Because it's easy and fast to do. I like to work fast. No more than five hours on a design. I like to do tattoos in only one session;













a shoulder or a calf. When I work in other styles, I need to take more time than when I do Japanese designs for example. I used to use vibrant colours and then I decided to focus more on intense and deep colours. Close to the colours of the sunset.

WHY IS SYMBOLISM OF SUCH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO YOUR WORK?

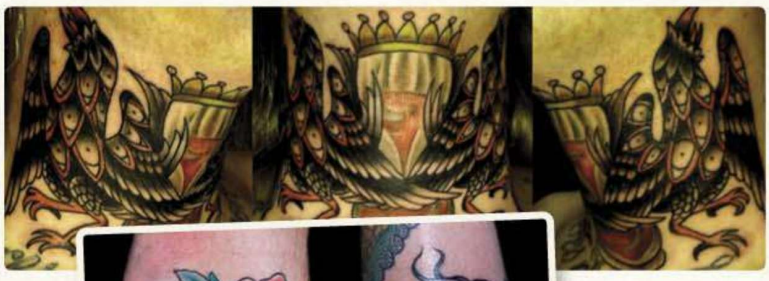
Mainly, I try to get people to react and I noticed that using a mystic vocabulary is intriguing for a lot of people. They try to understand why a particular symbol has been used. Maybe I feel close to this idea because

SHEER GENIUS (III)
For a quarter of a century, Jodorowsky held classes and lectures for free, in cafés and universities all over the city of Paris. Typically, such courses or talks would begin on Wednesday evenings as tarot divination lessons, and would culminate in an hour long conference, also free, where at times hundreds of attendees would be treated to live demonstrations of a psychological 'arbre généalogique' ('tree of genealogy') involving volunteers from the audience.











I USE A LOT SYMBOLS AND CREATURES FROM OLD RUSSIAN BOOKS WHERE THE ICONOGRAPHY CONSISTS OF MONSTERS, SCARRING REFERENCES, BEDTIME STORIES

my mother is a kind of medium and paranormal therapist. I grew up in that atmosphere, where symbolism is a kind of hidden language you can read and understand only if you know the symbols, otherwise you don't get the meaning and the composition stays secret and mysterious. All the signs in the world are connected because people trade meanings while travelling and created a new language – and I like this idea of bringing some magic to my tattoos that could maybe also change a life.

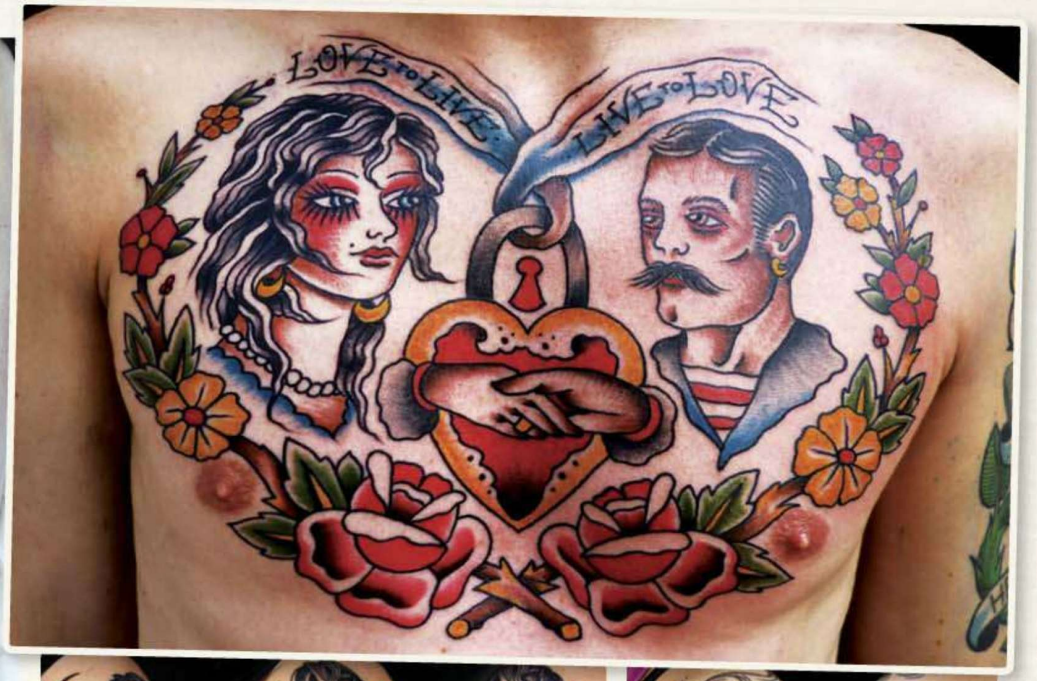
YOU TAKE YOUR INSPIRATION FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES, HOW DID YOU BUILD YOUR LANGUAGE?

I use a lot symbols and creatures from old Russian books where the iconography consists of monsters, scarring references, bedtime stories. After having taken a lot from Russian iconography, I'm now interested in other fields. I try to modify my mind and my drawing technique in order to create new monsters, to mix up elements. The most important thing to me is not to do just any old thing, but to truly value the meaning of things. It's just a matter of respect for me, so I prefer to get inspiration from the original rather than a copy.

WHICH SYMBOLS DO YOU MOST LIKE TO WORK WITH?

I really like working with Masonic symbols and now I'm really interested in Egyptian and









THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO ME IS NOT TO DO JUST ANY OLD THING, BUT TO TRULY VALUE THE MEANING OF THINGS. IT'S JUST A MATTER OF RESPECT FOR ME, SO I PREFER TO GET INSPIRATION FROM THE ORIGINAL RATHER THAN A COPY

Mesopotamian symbols. I am always really curious and when I saw the work of Rudy Fritsch, I was really intrigued. "Why was the skull below a triangle, why did he put this eye here…?" I tried to understand all the symbols he used and once I got them, I started using them. I still use the wolf because it comes from Rome, where we are all children of the wolf, which harks back to Romulus and Remus.

AND YOUR INFLUENCES?

In Italian culture, I like all the things connected to religion. I like Lempicka too. In tattoo, I like: Rudy Fritsch, El Monga, Jonas de Goteborg Classic, Chad Koeplinger and also Alejandro Jodorowsky who developed some theories about the power of symbols to exorcise things.



SHEER GENIUS (IV)

In these conferences, Jodorowsky would pave the way to building a strong base of students of his philosophy, which deals with understanding the unconscious as the 'over-self' which is composed of many generations of family relatives, living or deceased, acting on our own psyche, well into our adult lives, and causing our compulsions. Of all his work, Jodorowsky considers these activities to be the most important of his life. Though such activities only take place in the insular world of Parisian cafés, he has devoted thousands of hours of his life to teaching and helping people "become more conscious", as he puts it. Presently, these talks have dwindled to once a month and take place at the 'Librairie Les Cent Ciels' in Paris.

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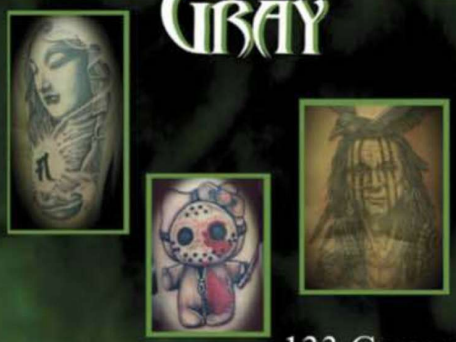
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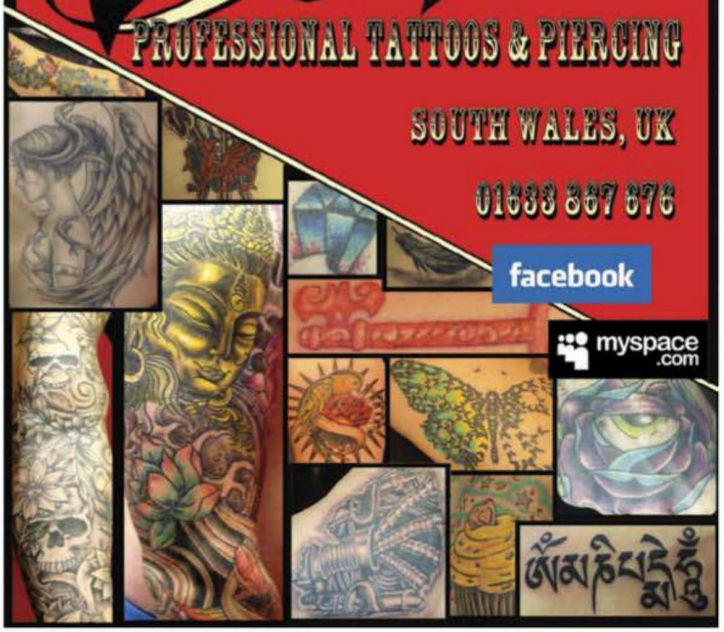
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Master CHEF

He's the youngest four-star chef in America. The owner of the first bistronomic restaurant in Chicago, which just so happens to be Michelin starred. He's a judge on reality TV show, MasterChef, and the culinary ambassador of Lollapalooza. We can only be talking about one man...



Barbara Pavone Graham Elliot

Chef Graham Elliot, owner of Graham Elliot, Grahamwich and Graham Elliot Bistro (opening this spring), has so many accomplishments to his name it's hard to keep count. Known as much for his cooking as for his blatant honesty and ink adorned arms, Elliot may only be in his mid-30s, but he just keeps on impressing.

Sitting down with Elliot in his namesake restaurant in the heart of Chicago, I was set on discovering his key to success.

"I've always had a strong work ethic; the day I turned 15, I got a work permit," he says, although his sights were originally set on a different goal.

"I used to sing and play guitar in a band and I thought that's what I was gonna do, so I got a job as a dishwasher at a little café down the street from the house. Surrounding myself in that kitchen environment with a lot of music playing and prepping and working with ingredients, I realized it was a creative outlet similar to music... I actually dropped out of high school and got a GED so that I could go to cooking school early and ever since then it has been this love affair with cuisine."

An affair that evolved in a number of cities. "My dad was in the Navy, so we moved all over the world. Working in the kitchen was great, looking at a lot of cookbooks, and I thought at least wherever I move I'll be able to get a job and use my hands and make something."

Living in Hawaii, the Philippines, California and Maryland due to his father's service, Elliot didn't ease up much on the travelling once he was on his own, working in Virginia, Texas, Illinois and Vermont after the age of 20.

Deciding "culinary school was not really for me", he began drawing knowledge from books and from eating out. "I think I'm still paying off credit card debt from places I've eaten for the last 15 years," laughs Elliot.

Natural predisposition didn't hurt either. "I always had this kind of ability to understand ingredients, like realize something's rich and creamy, something's crunchy, acidic, all those flavors and textures and how they have to balance and I could put dishes together in my head and on paper, even though I couldn't execute 'em or cook them, so it was being able to be creative and then having to go and discipline myself and learn how to do the actual techniques."

Following stints at Charlie Trotter's

CHARLIE TROTTER'S INFLUENCE

I discovered this cookbook by a chef named Charlie Trotter based here in Chicago and that really opened my eyes to this idea that food could be a form of expression and that was the defining moment. From there, instead of complaining about having to work on weekends and the hours and all those things, it was, I wanna work 20 hours a day, I don't care if I get paid or not, I have to do this.


I've always had a strong work ethic the day I turned 15. I got a work permit, he says, although his sights were originally set on a different goal



(the reason for his initial move to Chicago) and The Peninsula hotel, as well as some more moves – what did you expect? – it came time to go after the greatest goal of all. "I always said if I didn't open my restaurant by 30 I'd quit cooking, so I signed the lease, like, a month before my 30th birthday."

Graham Elliot was on a mission. "It was about flipping it on its head and saying, I don't care if someone gives us zero stars or 100 stars, I don't care if people like what we do or don't, I want to prove that you can redefine fine dining so that there's, you know, if people say you need flowers and linen and ten forks and knives, I'm gonna do one plate, one fork." The top priority being "to show that food can still be beautiful and artistic, but in a setting that's not making you feel suffocated. Food doesn't taste better if you wear a tie."

Spending time at the restaurant every day before opening and regularly popping in during dinner service – that's when excited diners leap out of their chairs, cameras in hand, swarming towards Elliot, almost pouncing (trust me, I've seen it firsthand) – Elliot and his team work closely to create cohesive menus that change with the seasons, leaving only one constant: "there's no recipes in our kitchen."

Which, somewhat surprisingly, doesn't ever lead to culinary mishaps or mismatches. "I always use the music analogy, there are things that I like as an artist to put together, and this isn't trying to speak negatively of anyone, but sometimes the public isn't ready for that. If I say I want to make a lobster roe ice cream with sea urchin, in a cerebral sense it's delicious, it works, there's brininess with texture and sweetness, but people don't wanna eat that, so really it's finding that balance of scaring them enough, but giving them enough deliciousness that they kind of go along with you."

Perhaps one of the most ingenious examples is his foie gras lollipop covered in Pop Rocks. "If you told someone you're serving popping effervescent candy for ten cents on a $40 a pound piece of fat and force-fed goose liver, it doesn't sound as good as calling it a foielipop!"

MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC
I wanna record something, I wanna do music. I'm always on GarageBand on my iPad. I play mostly acoustic things and I actually recorded stuff and put it on the playlist here in the restaurant, but nobody knows when it's me playing. And it's not an ego thing as much as it's I want to have as much of a connection to the restaurant as possible.



SIDE PROJECTS: FROM MASTERCHEF TO LOLLAPALOOZA

Going through a list of everything Elliot's involved in makes me think he may be a full-blown workaholic; albeit a darn good one, juggling two other restaurants and two side gigs.

Grahamwich offers "homemade sodas on tap, soft serves that change every season, a couple little snacks and sandwiches", while GE Bistro will be "a place that's really loud and really fun, with no rules and nothing over 20 bucks".

In addition to which he's culinary ambassador for music festival, Lollapalooza, and, just because there's so much free time on his hands, a judge, along with Gordon Ramsay and Joe Bastianich, on







GRAHAM ELLIOT AS A DISH
There was one that I think we did here that was a risotto, but instead of parmesan it was made with cheddar and it had crispy bacon and green apples and Cheez-Its on top and beer-braised onions, PBR braise 'cause they're hipster style. The idea was based on a road trip through Wisconsin. Incorporating those things together I think is something that shows who I am, my approach.



MasterChef, which recently wrapped up casting for its third season. A task that's harder than it sounds.

"I can put away some food, contrary to my size, I know you wouldn't believe it [laughs], but there's so many different things, spices and richness and all of that, so after a while it can get overwhelming."

And judging isn't the easiest either. "I don't think we disagree, but everything is real. It's us tasting things and a lot of times we'll have to stop and go off camera. Gordon might say 'Absolutely not, it's over seasoned' and then I'll say, 'Yeah, but the idea behind it was amazing'... and then Joe will come in and say, 'If I was dining at a restaurant and had this, or if I was serving and this happened, it wouldn't fly', so we all give that input and then decide. We get on the same page and then make the decision."

FOOD INK: SAINTS AND PINEAPPLES

Getting his first tattoo as soon as he turned 18, Elliot has gone from a design he drew himself – "It didn't have any real meaning behind it like the first one I think for most people" – to band tattoos, to extremely unique works that demand a second (and third) look.

First things first: the music. Elliot's left leg boasts a "maze with a man lost in the middle", an ode to Face to Face, because "when you're 18 and fighting the world, that's what you're all about." While the four 'F's on his arm are a shout out to Jawbreaker, "which was like my favorite band and saved my life in high school by being on all the mixtapes."

A father of two boys whose middle names are Ignatius, after Ignatius J. Reilly in A Confederacy of Dunces, and Mathias, after a chef he worked under at Charlie Trotter's, the two saints sit perched on his upper arms.

But it's his forearms that are, without a doubt, the scene-stealers. The tattoo on his right arm was designed by his brother, showcasing "birds that can't fly overcoming their obstacles, so it's a kiwi with balloons, the penguin with the little propeller, a dodo with a jetpack and an ostrich with the giant fake wings."

As for the left, "it's all the states I lived in growing up with a thumbtack in the city I was in and a symbol for each state; so Washington, California, Maryland, Virginia, Texas, Hawaii, Illinois, Vermont and the Philippines."

Another story that could make anyone smile comes in the hand holding people, which looks like fire. "It's from a book called *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibranand; that was a big book that kinda set me in a direction of being focused on philosophy and life. In high school I tried to start my



own religion, I was very much that guy, you know, like let's fight and live off the land," laughs Elliot.

"I also have 'Innocence' written down my arm in, like, prison-style font. That's when I was 20 in Texas. I was straightedge for a month and had to get it... I don't really like it now, but even if I don't like it I can look back and see it and know exactly where I was at that point in my life, so I think it's a cool little roadmap."

Having work from a variety of people, Erik Gillespie of Tomato Tattoo is now his artist of choice when the need for ink kicks in.

"I get kind of an itch to get a new tattoo and then I start focusing on where I'm at at that point in my life and what I want. I think in the kitchen it has become so cliché, kind of like you have to have tattoos, you gotta get a sleeve of something because that's what chefs have and it includes a pig and some vegetables and a bunch of



shit like that. I have no food tattoos. There's a pineapple and a ham, but it's because in Virginia it's what they make, and then Hawaii it's pineapple.

As soon as John Mayer gets a sleeve tattoo they're not fucking cool and that's the deal, so I don't know, I think that they need to be forms of expression, they need to tell a story and I have friends that have got tattoos lately who just, I don't know where they got the idea, it means nothing, it's just because it looks cool right now. It's very sad to me as it's such an important thing. Not even the permanence or the pain, but really



it means everything to you, it's who you are. Everyone's gonna ask you what it's about and the whole thing is you should be able to say, 'I'm not gonna say a word to you, look at my tattoos and you'll know who I am.'"

Decidedly telling me there won't ever be "corn growing out of my wrists," but calling avocados 'super sexy' makes me think an avocado backpiece may be the way to go.

So if tattooing had the opportunity to be turned into a delectable dish, what would it be? "I would start with a soup and think of how you can puree things and have different textures so when you pour 'em together and kind of plate them Jackson Pollock-style, you see all these colors and things melting together, so that the sum is better than each one on its own."

Spoken like a true master chef.

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In 2008 Marija Ripley opened up The Sailor's Grave in Copenhagen with her husband, Judd Ripley. In 2011 they moved to a new location and now she has a hard time imagining a workplace without him…

Marija Ripley grew up outside of Copenhagen where her childhood was characterised by riding and drawing. Unfortunately her parents couldn't afford to buy her a horse, making drawing her primary pastime.

"My parents always supported me in my early interest in drawing, she says. They took me to art exhibitions and always supplied me with the material I needed. I attended my first drawing class when I was 11 years old and obtained a dispensation to attend a class for adults."

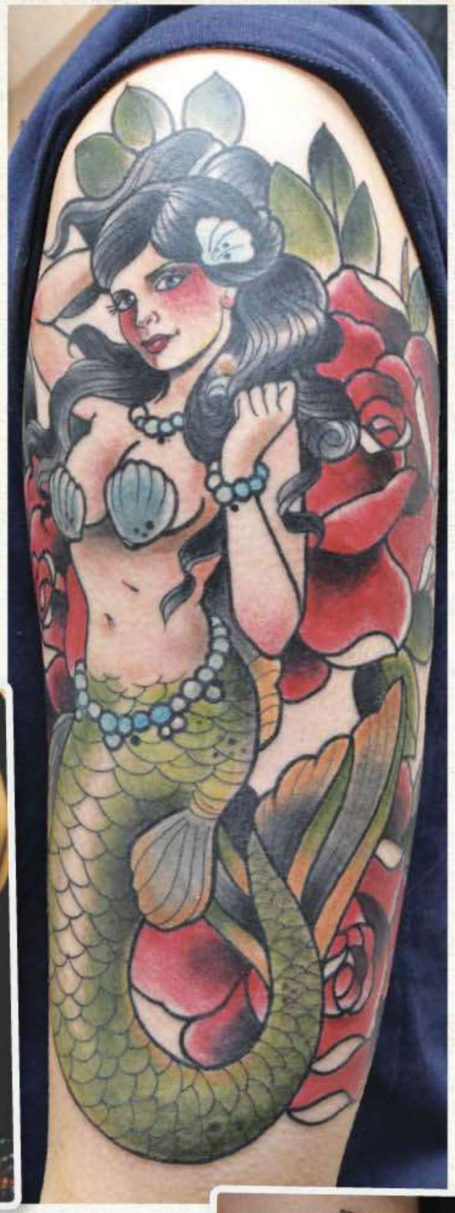
Artists in her family have been plentiful, making her choice to become a tattoo artist less of a surprise to her parents…

"I think my parents expected me to become something within the art community. After graduation I went to different art schools and spent my time with people sharing my passion for drawing. I was doing a bit of everything, graphic work, art and illustrations, and already at 15 years of age, I knew I was going to get heavily tattooed. This was back when new school started appearing in tattoo magazines and I thought that was the coolest thing I'd ever seen. I remember reading an article about Kim Saigh (probably best known from LA Ink), who at the time was new in the tattoo world, and I devoured everything I read.

"I suddenly realised that I was to become a tattoo artist, since that's what I was drawing. So I spent the following two years trying to get an

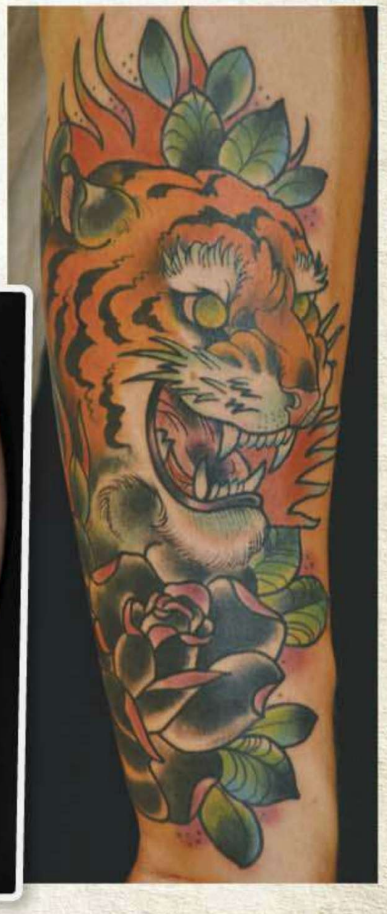
Simon Lundh

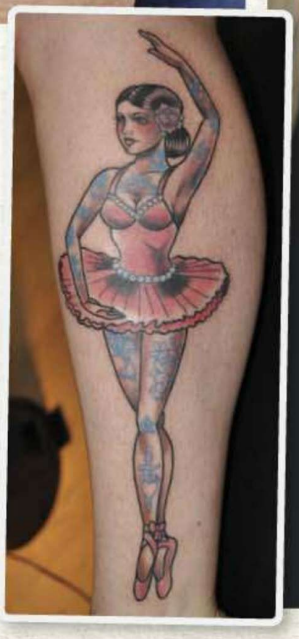












apprenticeship. Some of the oldies in the business checked out my portfolio, while others just chucked me out. As an 18-year-old girl with a binder filled with pseudo new school, it was pretty hard to get my foot in the door. Finally I was offered an apprenticeship at the studio where I was getting tattooed. That was March 1, 2000."

Although tattooing has become her profession, she hasn't quite let go of the riding. Nowadays she has a horse and two dogs.

> I WAS DOING A BIT OF EVERYTHING, GRAPHIC WORK, ART AND ILLUSTRATIONS, AND ALREADY AT 15 YEARS OF AGE I KNEW I WAS GOING TO GET HEAVILY TATTOOED

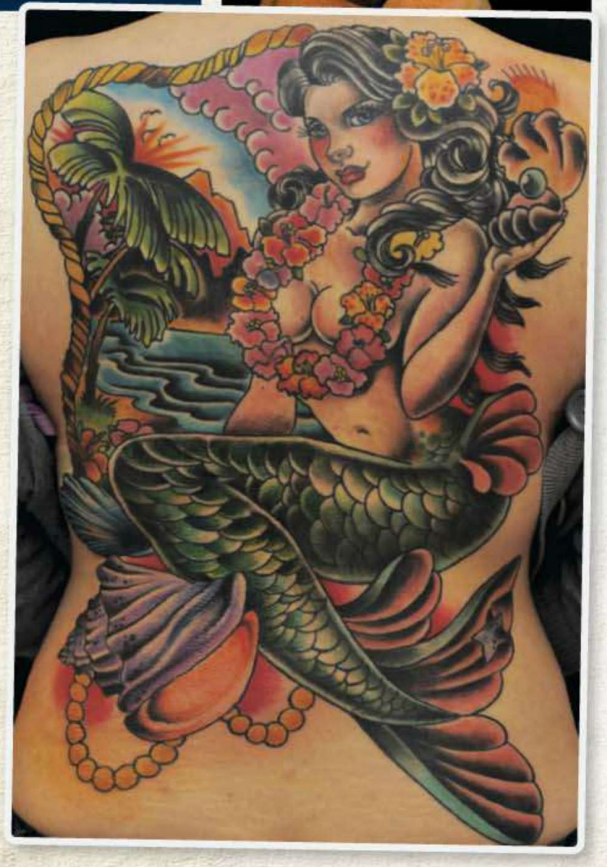
"I don't compete – yet, but at the same time I don't want to say I'm just riding for fun. I always try to get better, but it's also my sanctuary. I have my riding buddies and we rarely talk about work, which is nice for a change. When three or four of us take a ride in the woods or on the beach, it's like a meditation. It's also good for preventing back, neck and wrist problems, which many of my colleagues are suffering from.

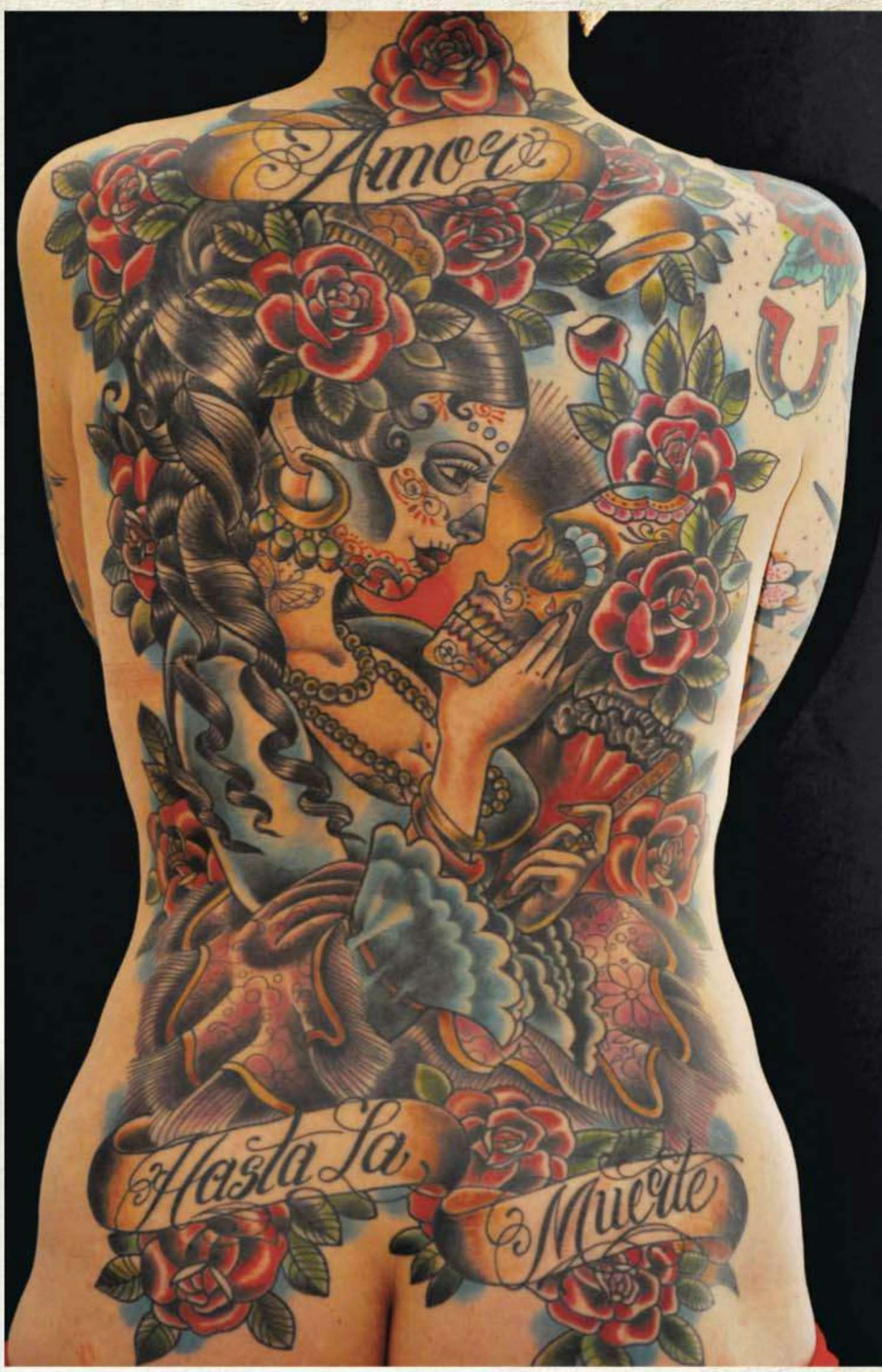
"It took me many years to find my ground and my own identity in the



BEWARE THE SIRENS
Claimed sightings of dead or living mermaids have come from places as diverse as Java and British Columbia. In some of the earliest accounts of Blackbeard's sail logs in the BBC documentary Pirates, he instructed his crew on several voyages to steer away from charted waters which he called 'enchanted' for fear of Merfolk or mermaids, which Blackbeard and many members of the crew reported seeing and documenting. These sightings were often recounted and shared by many sailors and pirates who believed the mermaids were bad luck and would bewitch them into giving up their gold and dragging them to the bottom of the seas. In August 2009, the town of Kiryat Yam in Israel offered a prize of $1 million for anyone who could prove the existence of a mermaid off its coast, after dozens of people reported seeing a mermaid leaping out of the water like a dolphin and doing aerial tricks before returning to the depths. The prize has not yet been awarded.





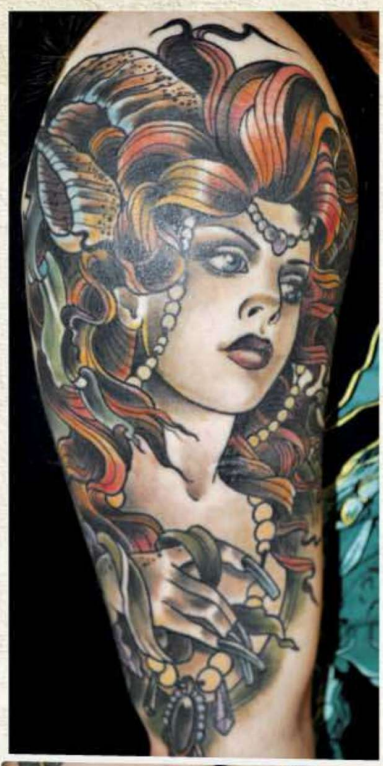


tattoo world. In 2003, I got a job at the then newly opened Frith Street Tattoo in London. Besides learning technique there I also learned how to incorporate old school values in my work. It was the most hectic year of my life, but thanks to the high level of quality in the studio and Nikole Lowe's hard but well-meaning critique, it was also the year where I learnt the most. Slowly, people started to request my pin ups, the ones I've always drawn. One thing led to another and today I'm fortunate enough to be drawing what I love the most, different variants of pin ups… and animals."

MERMAIDS ARE SIMPLY MAGICAL. I LOVE THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE A BITTER SWEETNESS TO THEM, THAT THEY CAN BE BEAUTIFUL AND INNOCENT AS WELL AS UNPLEASANT SIRENS

Another popular tattoo design of hers is mermaids, which she also collects.

"Mermaids are simply magical. I love the fact that they have a bitter sweetness to















them, that they can be beautiful and innocent as well as unpleasant sirens. I generally prefer to draw stuff that is not just beautiful, but also has a twist of ugliness, or the other way around."

In 2001 Marija met her husband, Judd Ripley. Six years later they got married and a year after that they opened The Sailor's Grave in Copenhagen together. In 2011 they moved to this new location in the centre of the Danish capital where they really enjoy working together.

"Judd has always been my favourite person to work with. I used to laugh my ass off at his ridiculous jokes, and now we run a studio together. It's fantastic. We have two floors and we work on one floor each so I don't have to hear his jokes every day – but when one of us has the day off, we miss each other. It's great working together. Judd is still my favourite colleague and a constant source of inspiration on my behalf. I can't imagine not seeing him at work every day."

But can you talk about other stuff besides tattoos?

"Of course. But sometimes when we're out at a romantic restaurant or something we do have to agree not to talk about tattoos or the studio..."





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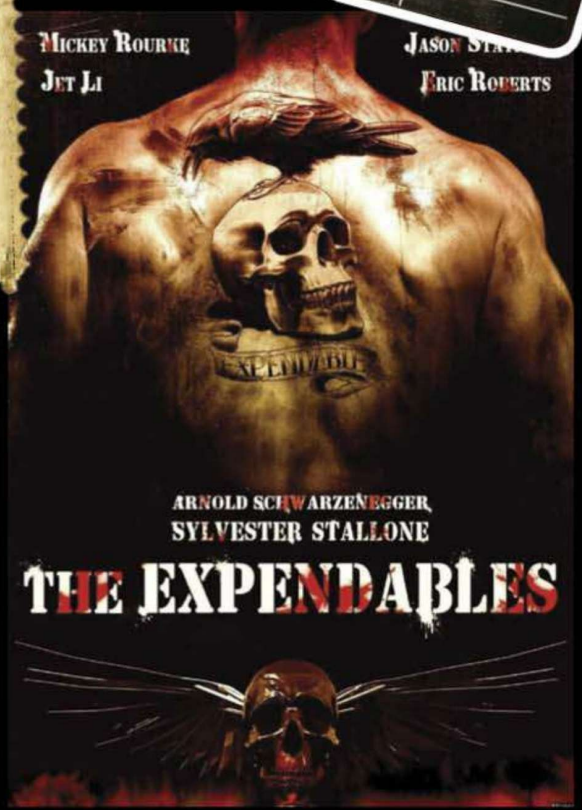


Continuing the series we began last issue with Paperback Writers, this issue we're taking a look at how tattoo has been brought on board by the screen medium to enhance its heroes and villains – not always with desirable consequences…

Sion Smith

I think we're all secure enough in our own skin to know that tattoo is used and abused by the creators of characters the world over who know it's all cause and effect for the masses. The smart writers are able to utilise it positively while the lazy ones will use it as a means to mark their creation as an immediate villain. I kind of understand that to the uninked masses, this is an easy play.

My first stop is with Robert Mitchum and his role in the classic *Night Of The Hunter*. With 'LOVE' and 'HATE' tattooed across his knuckles, this must surely be the most iconic image ever created by the media when it comes to tattooing. Remember, the movie was made back when tattoo wasn't anywhere close to the artistic



WITH 'LOVE' AND 'HATE' TATTOOED ACROSS HIS KNUCKLES, THIS MUST SURELY BE THE MOST ICONIC IMAGE EVER CREATED BY THE MEDIA WHEN IT COMES TO TATTOOING



(read: colour) world to Harry Powell is in DeNiro's depiction of Max Cady in the 1991 remake of *Cape Fear*. Interestingly, as homage goes, having Mitchum in the movie (who was the star of the original) is pretty damn cool. At one point, Mitchum takes a look at DeNiro's work and says, "I don't know whether to look at him or read him." No doubt more than a few have had the line aimed at you passed off as an original statement. More interestingly, Cady also states: "There isn't much to do in prison except desecrate your flesh", which may go some way to explaining rather a lot of things these days...

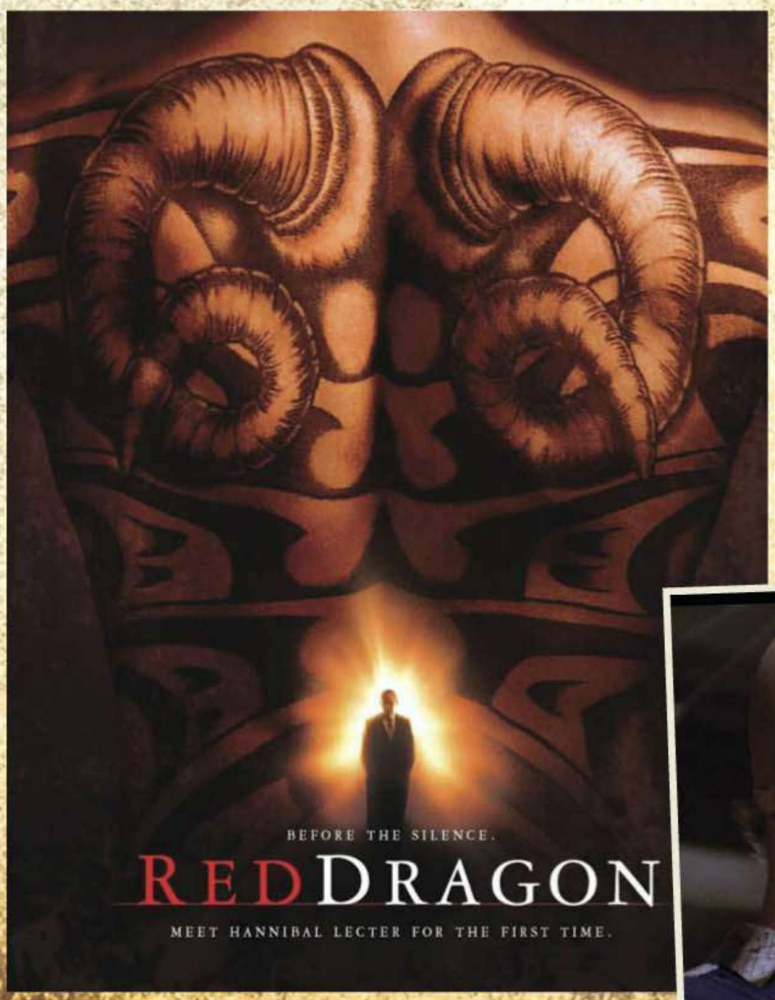
Just when you think a movie psycho can't be depicted much worse when it comes to tattoo, some years later, in 2002 to be exact, we have Francis Dolarhyde foisted upon us in Red Dragon. While the movie itself is passe at best, Francis

THERE ISN'T MUCH TO DO IN PRISON EXCEPT DESECRATE YOUR FLESH", WHICH MAY GO SOME WAY TO EXPLAINING RATHER A LOT OF THINGS THESE DAYS...

behemoth it is today. This comes from a time when tattoo was a real sign of an outsider. Digging deeper into the psyche of the character, Harry Powell, they are actually an external representation of his battle with himself. So iconic is the character that you can find it repeated the whole world over many, many times, but never with quite so much panache as Mitchum. Not bad for 1955.

The closest we get in the updated



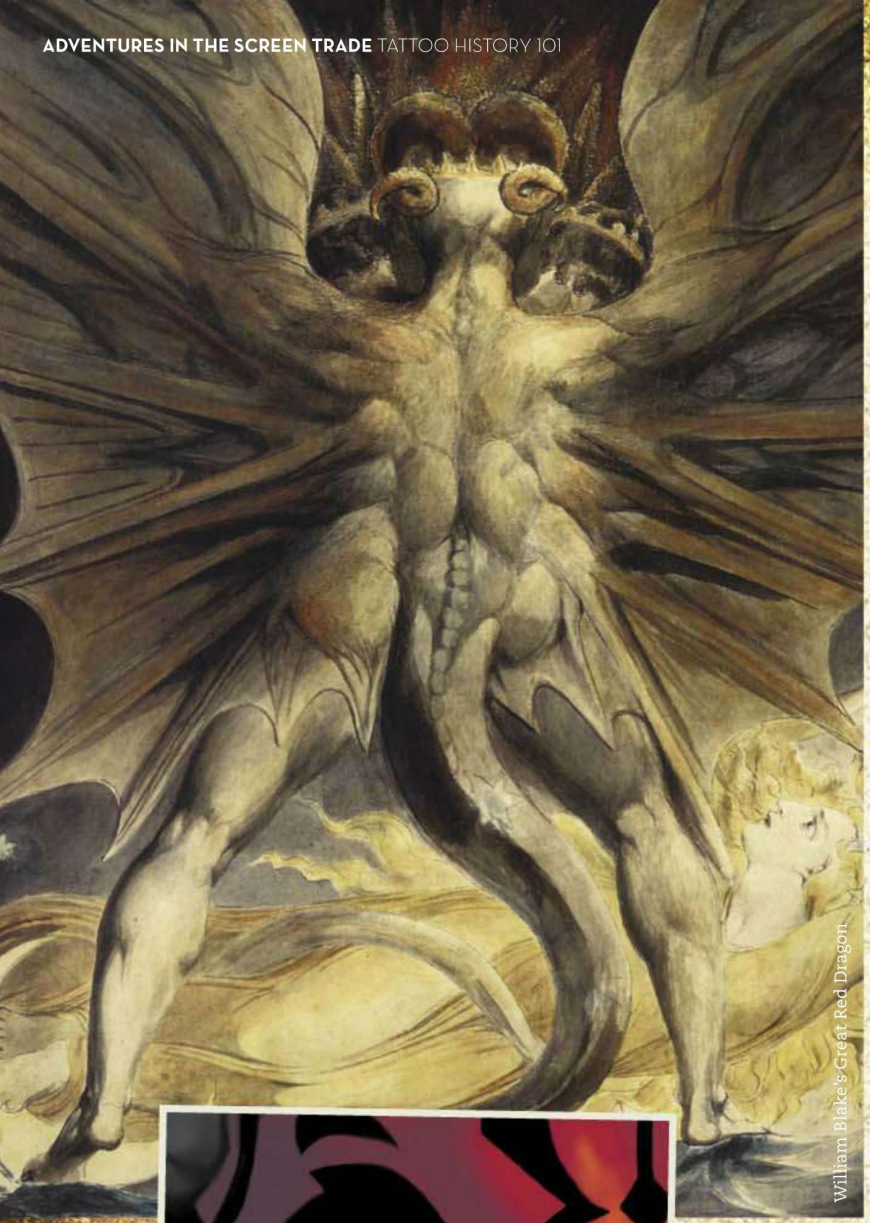




PRISON BREAK'S HIDDEN TATTOO MESSAGES (FROM SEASON ONE)

- Prison layout on Michael's back.
- Blueprints of the underground passageways of the prison on the front.
- Allen Schweitzer 11121147 is on his forearm, indicating the model of a screw needed to unscrew the cell's toilet to allow access to the interior layout of the prison.
- A small hexagon is the dot on the 'i' of 'Schweitzer'. It is to check if the screw's end was filed down properly to fit the bolt.
- CUTE POISON is the chemical formula, $3H_2SO_4(aq) + Ca_3(PO_4)_2(aq) + 6H_2O(l)$ $2H_3PO_4(aq) + 3CaSO_4(aq)\cdot 2H_2O(l)$, to produce phosphoric acid to dissolve the metal sewage cover.
- English Fitz Percy are the names of the three streets leading them out of the prison.
- Image of a devil's face to plot the drilling holes in Riots, Drills and the Devil Part 1.
- Playing cards with numbers '1 312 909 3529' shows the phone number of Nika Volek.
- Coffin with a cross to hint how to make his brother feel sick to avoid the execution.





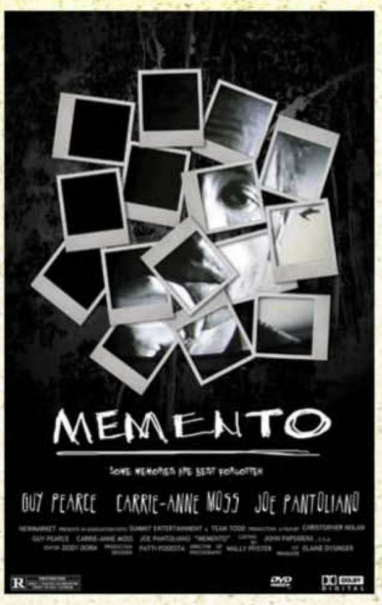
William Blake's Great Red Dragon



Darth Maul

PRISON BREAK'S HIDDEN TATTOO MESSAGES (FROM SEASON TWO)

- Ripe Chance Woods is actually 'R.I.P. E. Chance Woods'. In the cemetery, there was a grave for E. Chance Woods where buried clothes, keys to a car and fake passports were buried. This was the first tattoo deciphered by Agent Alexander Mahone.
- Barcode 38 12 1037 has several meanings. 38 refers to Illinois Route 38, 12 indicates the miles they need to reach the bridge while 1037 refers to the radio frequency 103.7, the one needed to activate the bomb for faking the brothers' death at the bridge.
- Bolshoi Booze is a mirror image of the numbers which form the coordinate 32°06'09"N, 104°57'09"W.
- A flower represented the Apache Desert Ghost exhibit, where the nitroglycerin was hidden.
- 617 indicates the password for a combination lock.
- A picture of Christ in a rose means Christina Rose, Michael's mother and the boat in Panama.
- Greek letters were originally on the design, but were left out during the real tattoo. They refer to the steps of escaping, for example, Alpha meaning step one (Allen Schweitzer 11121147), and Omega meaning the last step (Christina Rose).



(wrongly) by some that it is not a tattoo and actually his alien skin, in the novel, *Darth Maul: Shadow Hunter*, it is in fact revealed to be the work of Darth Sidious who marked him as part of his acceptance to the Dark Side. So there you go – stuff like that is always handy in a pub quiz.

Surely though, the most imaginative use of tattoo in the movies is *Memento*. It's a hard movie to describe without giving away a ton of the plot, so I won't. Suffice to say, tattooing your own body to remind yourself to kill somebody

TATTOOING YOUR BODY TO REMIND YOURSELF TO KILL SOMEBODY IS A GREAT IDEA FOR A MOVIE – NOT SO MUCH IN REAL LIFE

(played by Ralph Fiennes) is quite a coup. Not many people know that the backpiece is derived from William Blake's 'Great Red Dragon' (hence the film name, so how you could miss the reference, I'm not sure), but the result is defining nonetheless. A true great in the pantheon of movie criminals.

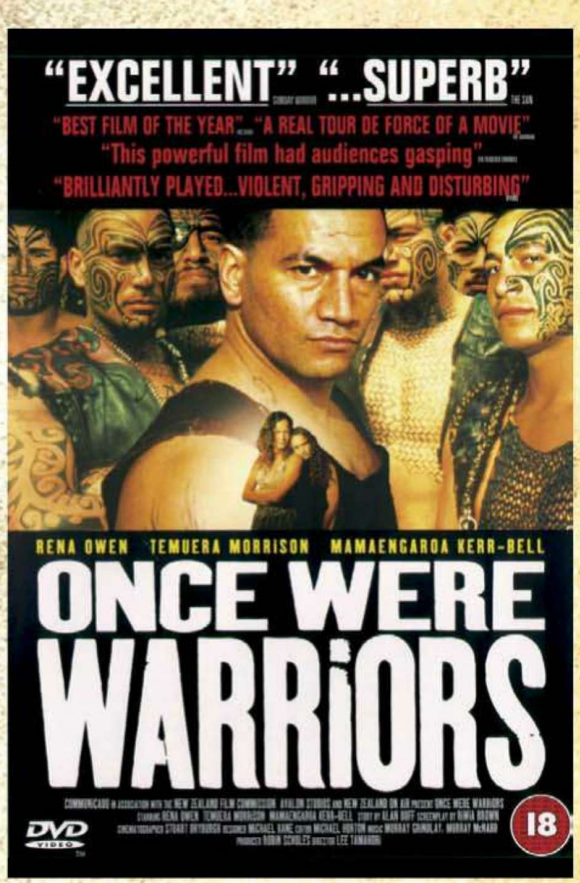
If there is a better movie psycho out there than Dolarhyde, I must have been washing my hair that night. To go more extreme than this, we must go left of field to find bigger and better villains. None come quite so extreme as Darth Maul from *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*. Assumed

is a great idea for a movie – not so much in real life however. You won't be winning any convention awards for 'John G. raped and murdered my wife' or 'Find him and kill him'. Tattoos aside, *Memento* is a great movie anyway and if you've not seen it, shame on you.

Now we come to one of my favourites – for multiple reasons. Does the name Michael Scofield mean anything to you? Ah yes – Dominic Purcell's anti-hero of the almost, but not quite great series, *Prison Break*. An entire body suit of black and grey depicting an a demon slaying an angel on the chest and the remainder being blueprints to the



ONCE WERE WARRIORS HAILS FROM NEW ZEALAND AND CENTRES ON DOMESTIC ABUSE VIOLENCE, BUT FAR FROM BEING AN ALAN SILLITOE KITCHEN SINK DRAMA





Darth Sidious - The world's most unlikley tattoo artist

prison's underground tunnels and passageways. Rather neatly, on his back we see the reverse of the chest piece and see an angel slaying a demon. Sound complicated? It is.

So complicated in fact that originally, they were all supposed to mean something far more complex than they ever got round to. With the show actually becoming far more successful than producers had imagined, by the time we got to the final season, we find that Michael has had them all conveniently lasered off. Rather him than me... and probably the most ridiculous tattoo concept we've ever been asked to believe on TV. Check out the box copy for more *Prison Break* goodies.

Can we get any more extreme than this? Well, being as you're asking and I've been around the block a bit and know 'stuff', yes we can. How about *Once Were Warriors?* Perhaps not a movie full of psychos in the 'traditional' sense of the word, but possibly more disturbing for it.

Once Were Warriors hails from New Zealand and centres on domestic abuse violence, but far from being an Alan Sillitoe kitchen sink drama, using the cultural backdrop of the Maori as a tool, the movie paints a far bleaker picture of life than *Saturday Night, Sunday Morning* ever could (SNSM by the way is an Alan Sillitoe book turned into a movie in 1960 starring Albert Finney which, despite being depressing as possible, contains no tattoos whatsoever

THE ROCK

One of the best 'movie star' tattoos out there, mostly because it's authentic and worn in the spirit intended. The Rock – better known these days as Dwayne Johnson (or if you're still with me in soul, still known as The Rock) sports this fine Marqusan tattoo by Po'oino Yrondi.

If you're interested in what's going on here and how much they actually mean when you drill in, take a look at this as The Rock talks us through it:

"There are coconut leaves, or niu, which denote a Samoan chief-warrior.

"There is the sun which brings good fortune.

"Isa/ga fa'atasi (three people in one). Me with my arms open. As it continues on my chest, it connects to my o lo'u to'a/ua (my wife, Dany) and my o lo'u afafine (my daughter, Simone Alexandra).

"The descending swirls represent past, present and future, with the future becoming ever bigger. The pattern continues under my arm, where its meaning is written: 'It changes in the place where it is found to be gone'.

"The two eyes, called o mata e lua, represent my ancestors watching over my path.

"The Great Eye, It's an intimidating symbol that allows its user to possess the spirit of his enemy. The eye is used to distract the enemy in a confrontation.

"The broken face, marked by shark teeth – a symbol of strength – is my spirit protector and a symbol of my struggle.

"The priest and spiritual guide, who raises a warrior to enlightenment and supernatural power under the eyes of the warrior's ancestors.

"The stones are of achievement and abundance. They're the foundation of my life and symbols of my dedication. They bring the right to stand and speak with honor as a Tula Fale – a high talking chief – and they maintain mana, or supernatural power.

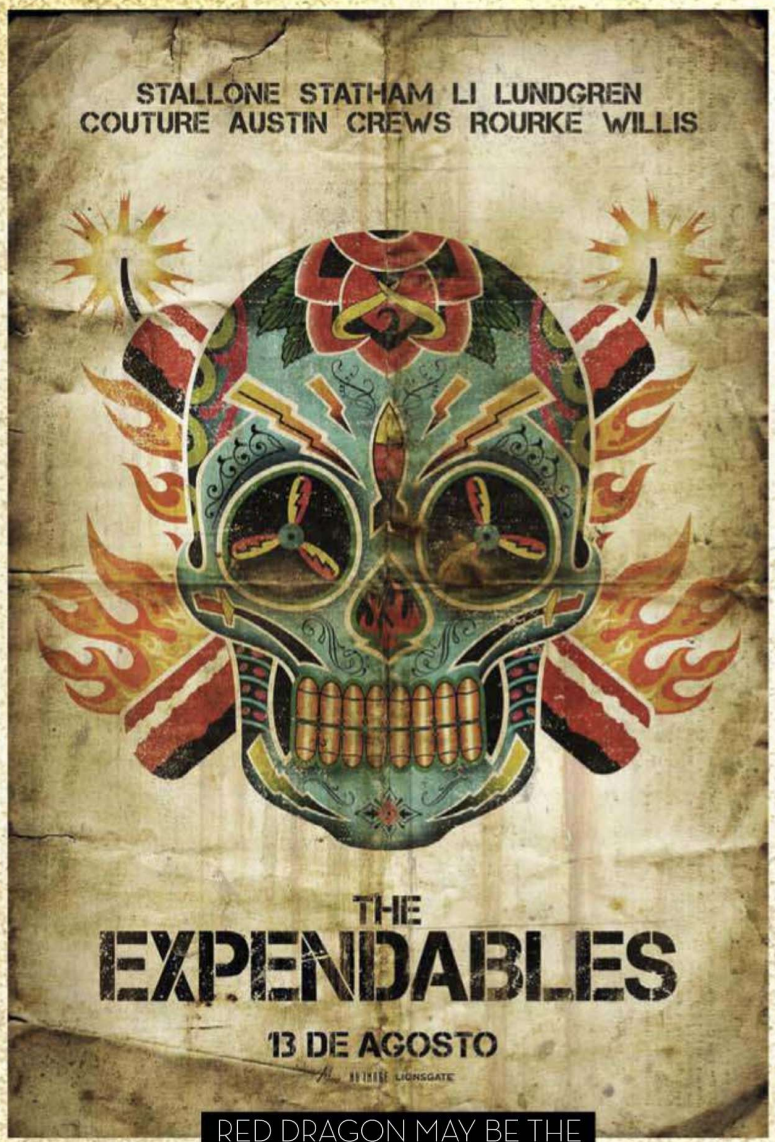
"A tortoise shell, to deflect evil spirits. Warriors used shells as shields."

Now that's what we call tribal.

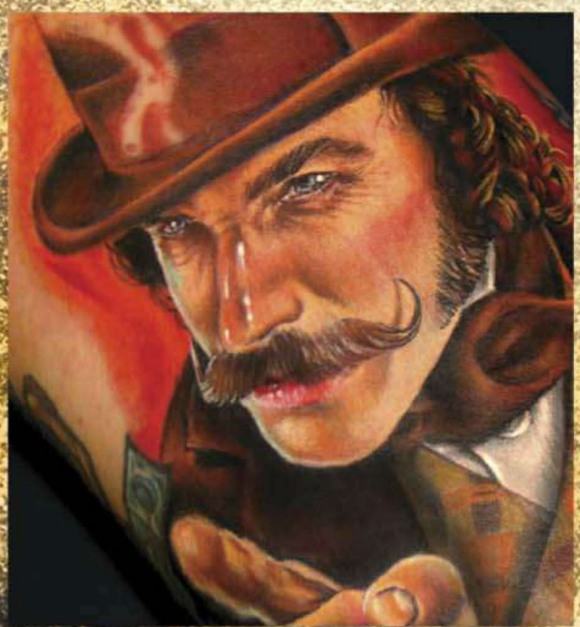


– to the best of my knowledge anyway). For paint, *Warriors* uses alcoholism, unemployment, wife-beating and the absence of hope to illustrate its point. Where *Red Dragon* may be the acceptable face of screen fantasy, Warriors is a powerful face of reality that is really hard to watch sometimes, but if nothing else it brought the clash between Maori traditions and modern values to a Western audience that knew little or nothing about it before.

Finally, to raise the tone a little (although that might be questionable after you read the next few sentences), *The Expendables* – rumour had it that each member of the crew had a version of the crow tattoo taken from the movie poster. Nice



RED DRAGON MAY BE THE ACCEPTABLE FACE OF SCREEN FANTASY, ONCE WERE WARRIORS IS A POWERFUL FACE OF REALITY THAT IS REALLY HARD TO WATCH SOMETIMES



to see Mickey Rourke in this flick as the tattoo artist, but surely the guys in the cast have got enough tattoos between them to insist that Mickey should be wearing gloves while he's chipping away at Stallone's back. Nobody in the world is that hard. Not even Chuck Norris.

Also of note is this movie's Italian poster graphic, which is actually much cooler… now that I'd like to see tattooed on somebody. Stay tuned next issue as we go much further underground…

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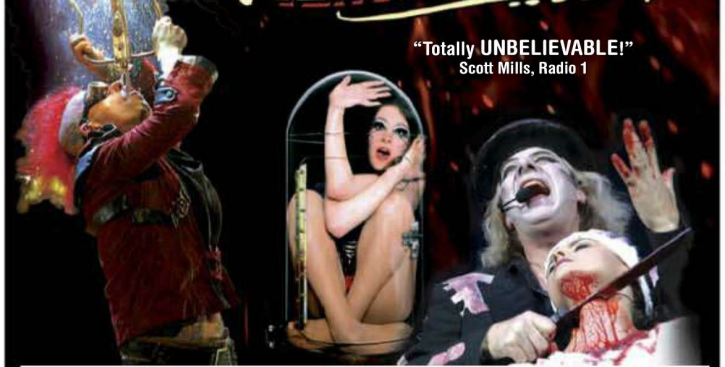
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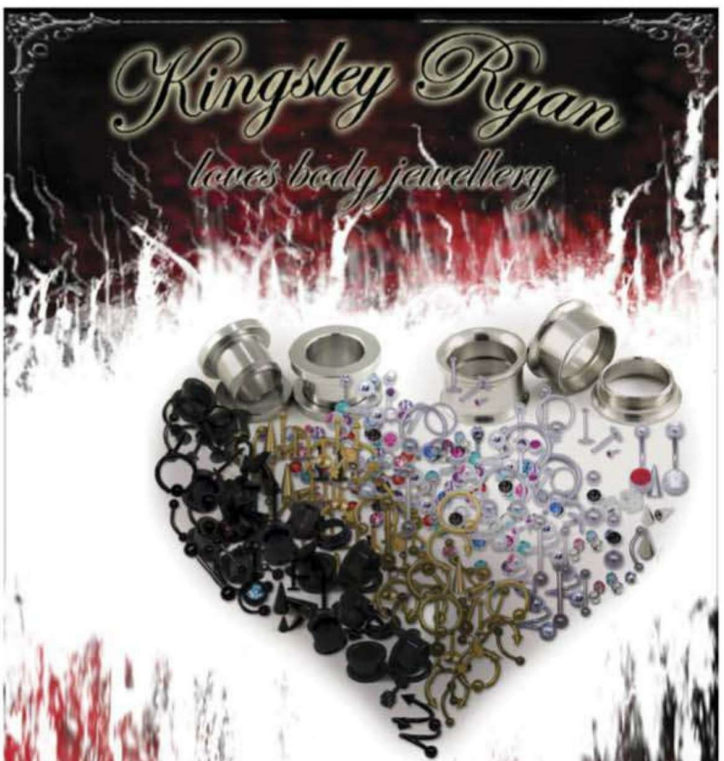
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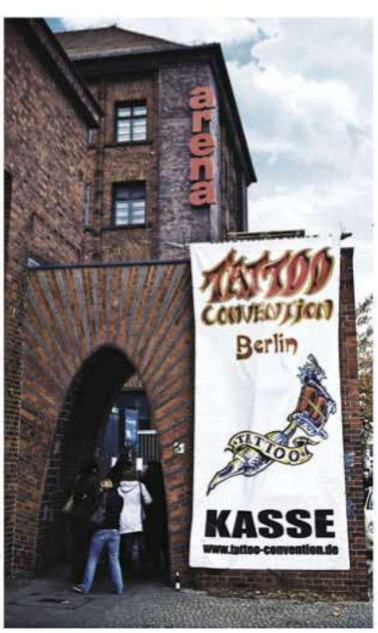
Berlin, the city of street art. Wandering through this open-air gallery is inspirational and exciting. It's a capital city, but doesn't feel like one – people here take the time to smell the roses, a completely different vibe to London's familiar rush



This is my first time at this long-running event. I've heard a lot about it and I was very excited to finally be able to experience it first hand. I had visions of a huge venue with endless crowds so busy they stepped on each other toes… but when I actually arrived at Arena, the thought 'is this it?' did pass through my head.

No disrespect to my imagination, but boy, how wrong can a girl be? However, with everything that was going on, I was soon very happy that it wasn't any bigger. I could hardly keep up with the incessant performances on the stage, the competitions and taking in the progress of some amazing pieces being created under the hands and eyes of some incredible artists. And you have no idea how hard it is to pass by Kamil, Liorcyfer, Boog, Pavel Angel, Anabi… and many other artist's booths without stopping by for at least a few moments.

EVEN WHEN YOU THINK YOU'VE SEEN IT ALL AND YOU'RE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT NOTHING COULD SURPRISE YOU ANY MORE, ALONG COMES A TATTOO TO PROVE HOW WRONG YOU ARE…



Agnieszka Hairesis

Friday was nice and relaxed. I figured out what's where and watched some great performances. Roc – the guy who puts latex gloves on his head and blows until they burst – can eat a 1.5m long balloon and spin with a bowling ball attached to his ears. Very impressive – if not a little bit sickening!

Later on the Friday, and in a more serious vein, I had the great pleasure to see a performance steeped in symbolism from the beautiful Japanese butoh dancer, Sanaxxx. She travels the world with her dramatic solo dance – 'Hannya' – a story about a vengeful woman consumed by jealousy, and it is beautiful.

Another highlight of the day was Pain Solution Freak Show Extreme. Princess of Scars, besides hammering long nails into her nose, dancing with flowers pierced into her skin and more, has also demonstrated a brand new way to make a salad – slicing vegetables on her body. In case you were wondering – yes, she welcomes tips, but only in cash… and only stapled to her body by the audience.

The day ended nicely with the very first tattoo contest, with Best of Friday being won by Yliana Paolinie from One More Tattoo in Luxemburg.

Saturday kicked off early and from the morning until late night, there was a very busy schedule that included some great performances, a Tattoo Queen contest and no less than nine tattoo contests (Best Large, Best Small, Best Crazy, Best Individual, Best Asia, Best Portrait, Best Biomechanical, Best Realistic and, of course, Best of Saturday).

CULTURAL BERLIN (1)
Berlin is home to 153 museums. The ensemble known as Museum Island is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is situated in the northern part of the Spree-island, between the Spree and the Kupfergraben in the central Mitte district. As early as 1841 it was designated a 'district dedicated to art and antiquities' by a royal decree. Subsequently, the Altes Museum (Old Museum) in the Lustgarten displaying the bust of Queen Nefertiti, the Neues Museum (New Museum), Alte Nationalgalerie (Old National Gallery), Pergamon Museum, and Bode Museum, were built there. While these buildings once housed distinct collections, the names of the buildings no longer necessarily correspond to their respective collections.


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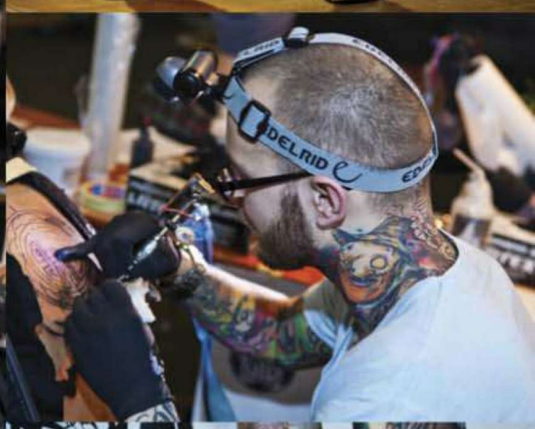




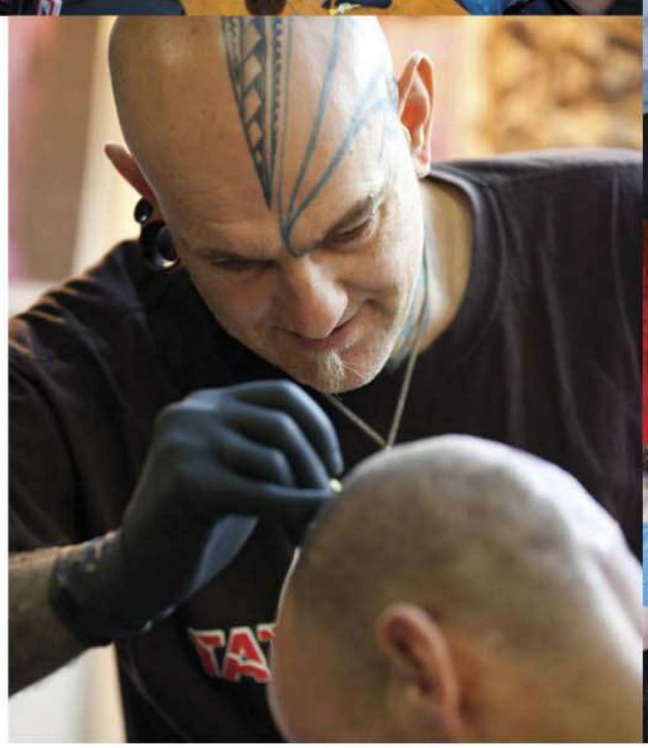






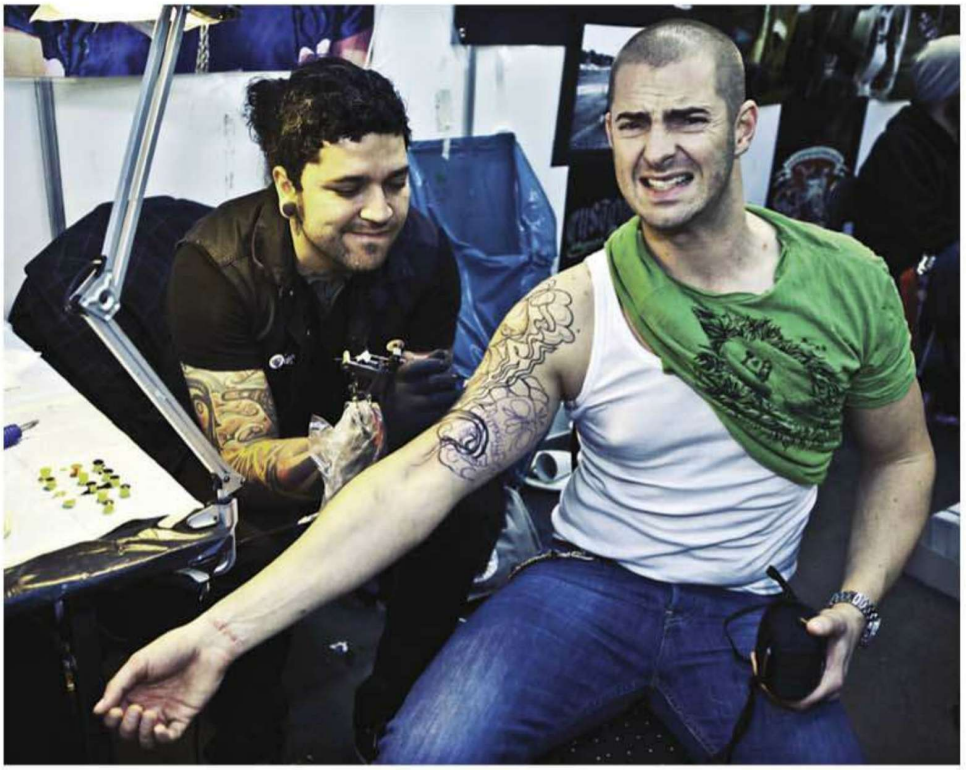



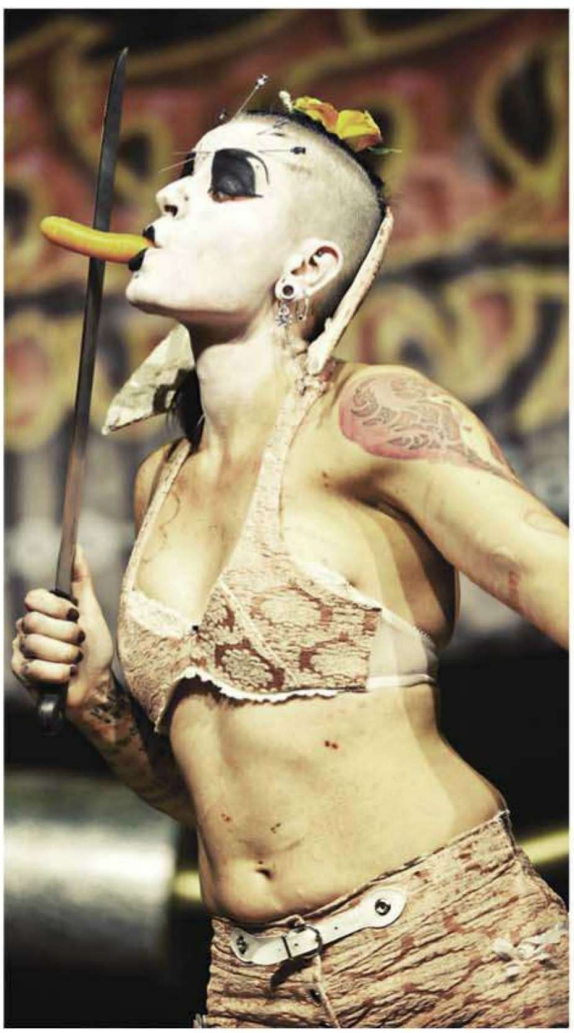


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And to top that, there were so many seminars that it would have been impossible to attend them all, even if I could have made the time.

But let's focus on tattoos for a moment. The colour and life bursting out of some were just incredible. The tiger back piece by Chikai (Novosibirsk, Russia), or maybe the owl chest piece by Dmitriy Samohin (Ukraine), were probably the greatest animal tattoos I've seen in the last few years. Portraits are considered by many to be some of the hardest tattoos to get right… well, for guys like Cristian Radu, Miguel Bohigues, Den Yakovlev or Electric Linda it doesn't seem like a big deal. However, I'm always most excited about the 'crazy' category – a section where anything can happen. Even when you think you've seen it all and you're under the impression that nothing could surprise you anymore, along comes a tattoo to prove how wrong you are. The piece that brought a huge smile to my face in this case, was a leg covered in child drawings designed by a little girl and tattooed by Hacke from Taka, Erfurt.





SUPERFLY SUSPENSION CREW TOOK OVER THE STAGE. THOSE GUYS KNOW HOW TO MAKE A HUMAN FLY IN THE MOST BIZARRE WAY YOU COULD POSSIBLY IMAGINE

After the competitions, the Superfly Suspension crew took over the stage. Those guys know how to make a human fly in the most bizarre way you could possibly imagine. There were ropes, hooks in the flesh and a lot of blood. What's weird is that it all looked so painless that if somebody would have asked me if I wanted to join in, I would've said "hell yes!" You could hear cheering from the audience and screams of excitement from the stage; it's a pretty incredible show, with images that will stay in my head for a long time.

Sunday with another five categories (Best Ornamental, Best Colour, Best Traditional, Best Black & White, and Best of Sunday) also revealed the Best of the Show winner – George Mavridis from Tattooligans took that prize for his colourful abstract portrait. The new Tattoo Queen 2012 was also crowned later that day; the beautiful Josephine Henke from Munich won everyone over with her smile and great back artwork from Janusz Bukowski (Yancoo Tattoo, Germany). She was handed over the crown and the title from 2010's winner, Carina Jost.





Whenever I had the time I checked out booths one by one to see the progress of the work and there were a few artists that caught my eye. Volko and Simone from Buena Vista with their unique style; Miguel Bohigues (V Tattoo, Spain) with his beautifully executed portraits (Miguel also won first place in Portrait and Black & White Tattoo, as well as third place in Small Tattoo). And it was also great to see Daveee and Edek from Cracow's Kult (Poland) working on their pieces. So many talented artists in one place at the same time will make your head a spin!

Even though I was busy working, I noticed that the atmosphere and the vibe from visitors was very relaxed and laid back. There was no rush and I loved the fact that people were not only tattooing or getting tattooed, but they were also drawing or reading, kids were playing and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Organizers did a great job providing just the right amount of entertainment, but I guess that's no surprise when you realize that it was the 21st edition of this event.

CULTURAL BERLIN (II)
Apart from the Museum Island, there are many additional museums in the city. The Bauhaus Archive was founded in Darmstadt in 1960 with Walter Gropius and other members of the Bauhaus movement giving their support. The collection grew so quickly that a dedicated museum seemed attractive and Gropius was asked to design it. In 1971 the Bauhaus Archive moved to temporary accommodation in Berlin. Modifying the plans for the location beside the Landwehrkanal, political decisions and financial restrictions delayed things. The foundation stone was finally laid in 1976 with the building was ready by 1979. There was not that much left of Gropius' original 1964 design apart from the characteristic silhouette of the shed roofs. In 1997 a conservation order was placed on the building.

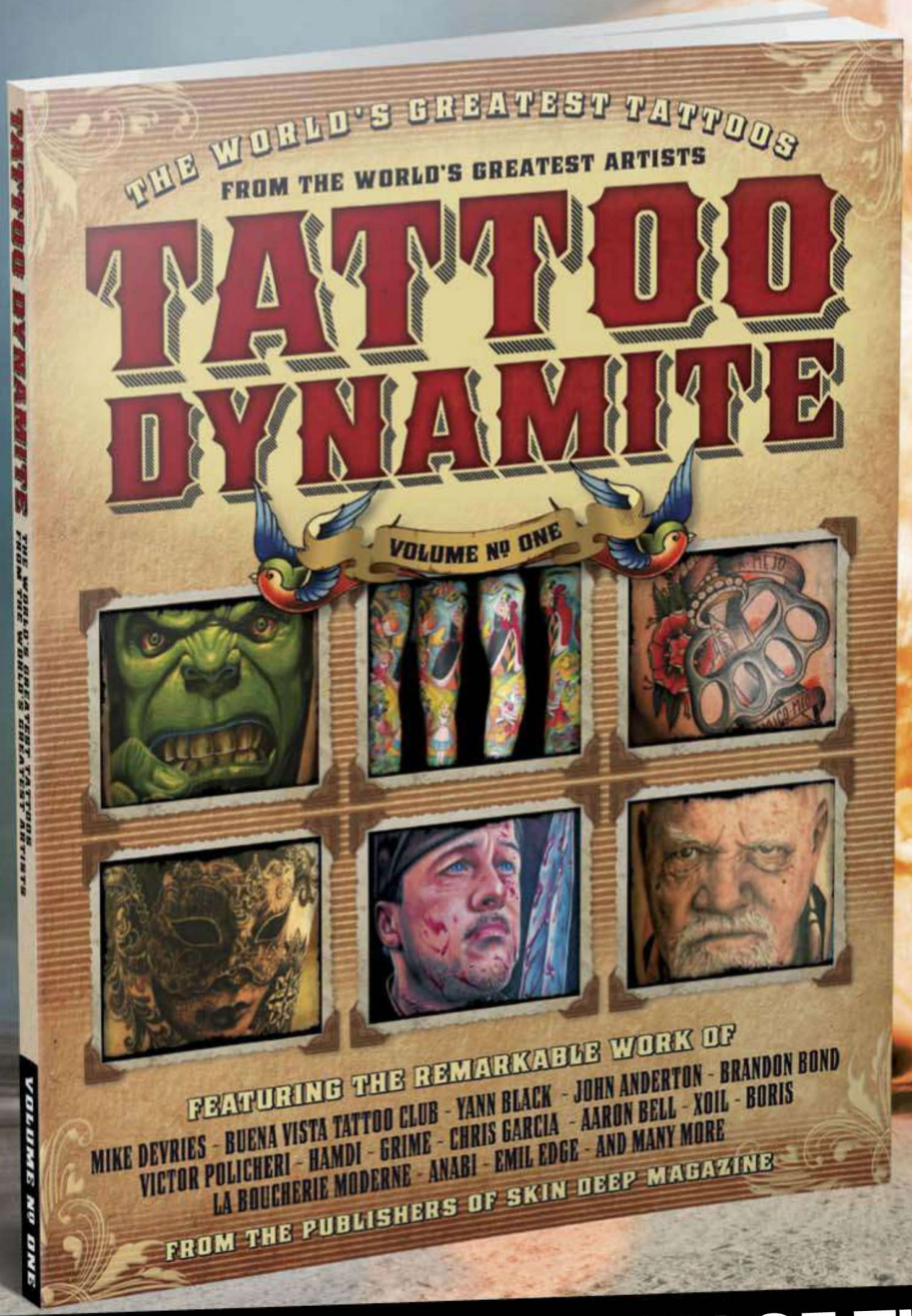
> IT'S SUCH A GREAT WAY TO LEARN AND EXPRESS FOR THE PARTICIPANTS, AND A VERY INTERESTING EXPERIENCE TO WATCH FOR THE AUDIENCE

I need to also mention here about Art Fusion. We hear more and more about this experiment lately. Every day at the convention people could watch some art pieces being created by various artists combining each other's skills and styles. It's such a great way to learn and express for the participants, and a very interesting experience to watch for the audience. In addition, just a wonderful thing to be part of, as afterwards all the pieces are auctioned with the money being donated to the social project 'Ark Berlin', for starving children in town.

Overall, I was very impressed with the Berlin Tattoo Convention. The location worked perfectly; it was easy to get to and I liked the fact that there was only one stage with everything was happening in one hall – a great idea to avoid potential confusion. There was a good artistic program over the three days. The calibre of artists was very high and I honestly wouldn't want to be in the judges' position as they obviously had some very tough decisions to make. It was a great place to meet old friends and make some new ones; the atmosphere was very friendly. German hospitality is remarkable; they are great hosts and pleasure to work with.

Auf wiedersehen, Berlin, I shall see you again next year…

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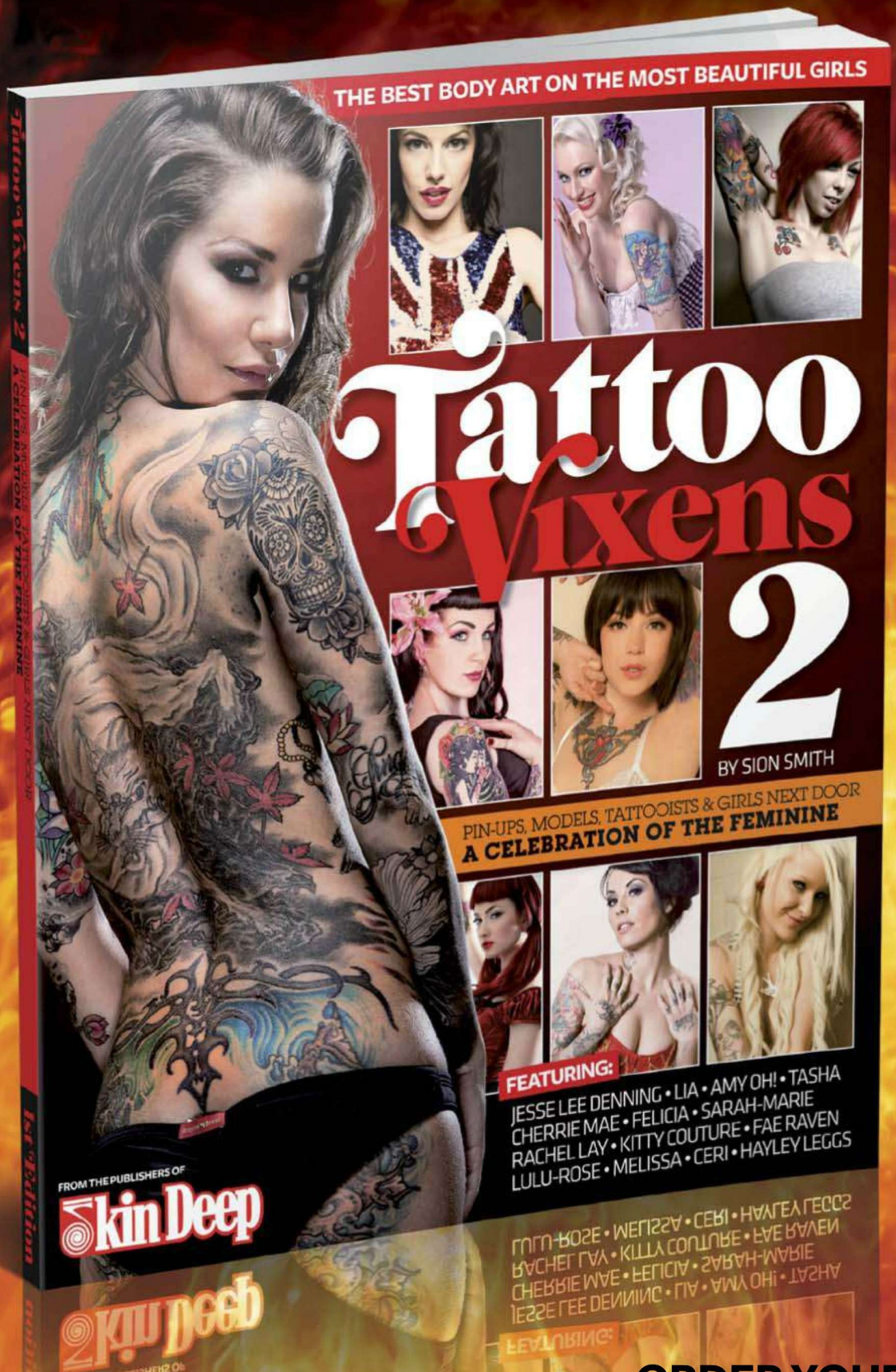
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Classifieds

WHETHER YOU'RE LOOKING FOR AN ADDITIONAL ARTIST FOR YOUR STUDIO, A HOUSE MANAGER OR ARE SELLING AN ESTABLISHED BUSINESS LOCK, STOCK AND TWO SMOKING BARRELS, THESE FREE STREAMLINED CLASSIFIEDS OUGHT TO GET THE BALL ROLLING. SEND YOUR NEEDS TO THE OLD SCHOOL, HIGHER KINNERTON, CHESTER, CH4 9AJ, OR EMAIL THEM INTO: EDITOR@SKINDEEP.CO.UK

All details correct at time of going to press. Adverts cannot be taken over the phone. Please include your full studio details even if they are not to accompany the wording.

Flaming Gun Tattoo Studio are looking to take on another artist to join our team. We are a well established and very busy, hard-working studio. We cover all aspects of tattooing and our work is custom based so a good all rounder is preferred, but not essential. Minimum of two years shop experience. Please have portfolio available for the interview. Email us at: flamingguntattoo@aol.com with a covering letter and a few photos of recent work. Our number: 01206 575705.

InKarma Southport are looking for a talented dedicated tattoo artist to join them on a full-time basis. Will consider part-time also. Studio experience is essential. A strong portfolio and excellent work ethic is a must. References will be required. Short term relocation help is available. If interested please email relevant information and images of your work to: inkarma@hotmail.co.uk.

TATTOO ARTIST WANTED! we at Arthur T's are looking for a third member to join our team at our busy custom studio in Heaton! Preferably a good all rounder with their own style. Must have previous studio experience and a good work ethic. Message us if you know anyone or are interested in the position for further info. Party animals and rock stars need not apply. Thanks and have a good day. Please get in touch via Facebook or contact the studio on (0191)265 0444 email: arthurtsnewcastle@live.co.uk.

Ravens Nest in Gravesend kent is expanding! We are looking for additional tattooists to join us asap. The work is piling up! So if you are competent at art, reliable, nice and a good tattooist, then get in touch. If you can produce a good work portfolio and not have any diva tendancies, drop me a line. We are very very busy and need the help! tattoo@ravens-nest.co.uk or telephone: 01474333282.

TATTOO APPRENTICE: This person WILL HAVE to be an AMAZING ARTIST – which means you have to have the ability to draw free hand and from trace. At interview you must bring with you your own original art. The ideal candidate will be hard-working, pay huge attention to detail, reliable, honest, and most importantly have an understanding of what your letting yourself in for! I am looking for an extremely rare person who can follow instructions to the letter and work off their own initiative.
IF YOU ARE ABLE TO COMMIT TO ALL OF THE ABOVE WE WILL INVEST TIME, MONEY AND A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE INTO YOUR APPRENTICESHIP, AND WELCOME YOU INTO OUR FANTASTIC TEAM…
To apply: 1. attach examples of your best work in an email and a little about yourself. 2. add us on FB: birminghamink@hotmail.co.uk, www.facebook.com/birminghaminktattoo.

Skin Inc Tatttoo Braintree are looking for a versatile tattooist to join our busy team. We're looking for someone with a minimum of three years shop experience with an up-to-date and diverse portfolio, who is happy to take on custom and flash work. The shop is part of a large tattoo family with the opportunity to work at the London and Brighton International Tattoo Conventions. Check out our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/skininctattoo or email the shop: skininctattoo@btconnect.com for more info.

Full-time tattoo artist position at Art 'n' Soul Tattoo Studio, Manchester. A modern, friendly and hygienic tattoo studio just outside Manchester City Centre, we are looking for a talented, hard-working, stylish and experienced tattoo artist who wants a bit of city life. If you are interested, get in touch. Send your portfolio or link to your work to: info@artnsoultattoo.co.uk or call us on 0161 223 5968. www.artnsoultattoo.co.uk FB: Seach Jam Tat Twitter: @artnsoultat

Busy Shop in South West London. Looking for two all around tattoo artists ASAP, with minimum three years experience to work as part of the team. We have a great clientele base lots of custom work, or opportunity for a part-time artist. It is a great opportunity for the right person. Must be clean, drug free. No scratchers or time wasters please. Contact me: daisyhorne92@yahoo.co.uk.





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An eye is upon you

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

Paula has taken some time off this issue – which leaves me to fill in the blanks. Back to normal next issue, but in the meantime…



Sion Smith

Tattoo Freeze just so happens to have wrapped itself up as this issue goes to print. We were pretty much done with the issue apart from a few pages, so reviews and photographs will follow next month, but something struck me about this show that I'd never noticed before – probably because I was sitting still for once.

A chance encounter meant that I got to meet a model. Yeah, yeah – another day, another dollar. That's not quite how it went though. This model was something else. See, I get quite introverted when I'm cornered – and there's nothing like being tattooed to corner you. I love meeting people – it's one of my most favourite things, really, but when I'm getting some ink, all I want to do is be just like one of you and go to 'the place'.

Anyway, one thing led to another and Lisa (Eagleton) and I got to talking. I honestly thought she'd never shut the hell up, but then she told me her story. The one about losing the bottom half of her leg after a serious accident.

Now I'm interested.

She told me how it changed her. How prior to the accident she was just a "…housewife – quite content to do my thing and keep the house above water." After the amputation of her leg, everything changed. She decided that it wasn't going to hold her back and she threw everything in the arsenal at her life.

As we all know, there ain't no shame in keeping your household going, but you can kind of see her train of thought. Something like that is a life-changer. No doubt about it.

Not ten minutes later, a guy goes past me in a wheelchair. I meant to get his name, but like I said, I was kind of stuck to a chair for a little while. He was busy taking photographs of, well, an awful lot of stuff. Using a stick and his mouth to operate the camera, his elbow to drive his chair – it was pretty impressive. If you're out there buddy, drop me a line, I'd love to hear from you.

DON'T WAIT FOR THE GODS TO THROW A SPANNER IN THE WORKS TO FIND THAT YOU REALLY HAVE GOT THE JUICE TO DO IT

Then, a couple of hours after this, I'm walking through the main hall past the various minstrels who have been touting their song-wares throughout the day and I see that the guy on the stage playing guitar is missing his right arm from the elbow down. Again, busy, busy and I missed the chance to catch up with him once he had finished (and likewise – please get in touch). It was one of those times were you need to check that you're really seeing what you think you are. Is that guy really playing guitar better than I do right now with, let's face it, a heavy disability for a guitarist? It was quite something. I had some vague plan a few months back to put a 'temporary' acoustic band together, rustle up a few friends and play some tunes at Freeze, but I got caught up in real-life and it never quite hit the ground. So instead of playing my ass off knocking out a down-tuned version of 'I Kissed A Girl', I simply stood there feeling a) ashamed of myself for not finding the time and b) being totally knocked-out that somebody in a less than perfect situation could.

These guys weren't the only ones. It's the tip of a very large iceberg but it begs the question – and I'm sure all of these guys would agree with me – what are you waiting for? If there's something in your heart that you feel you should be doing, for your own sake, get on with it. Don't wait for the Gods to throw a spanner in the works to find that you really have got the juice to do it.

I'm sure Lisa would give anything to turn back the clock and say she was a pole-dancer, but with a killer attitude about life, she is now (as far as we know), the UK's only amputee pole-dancer.

Kudos. Much of it.

AFTERWORD:

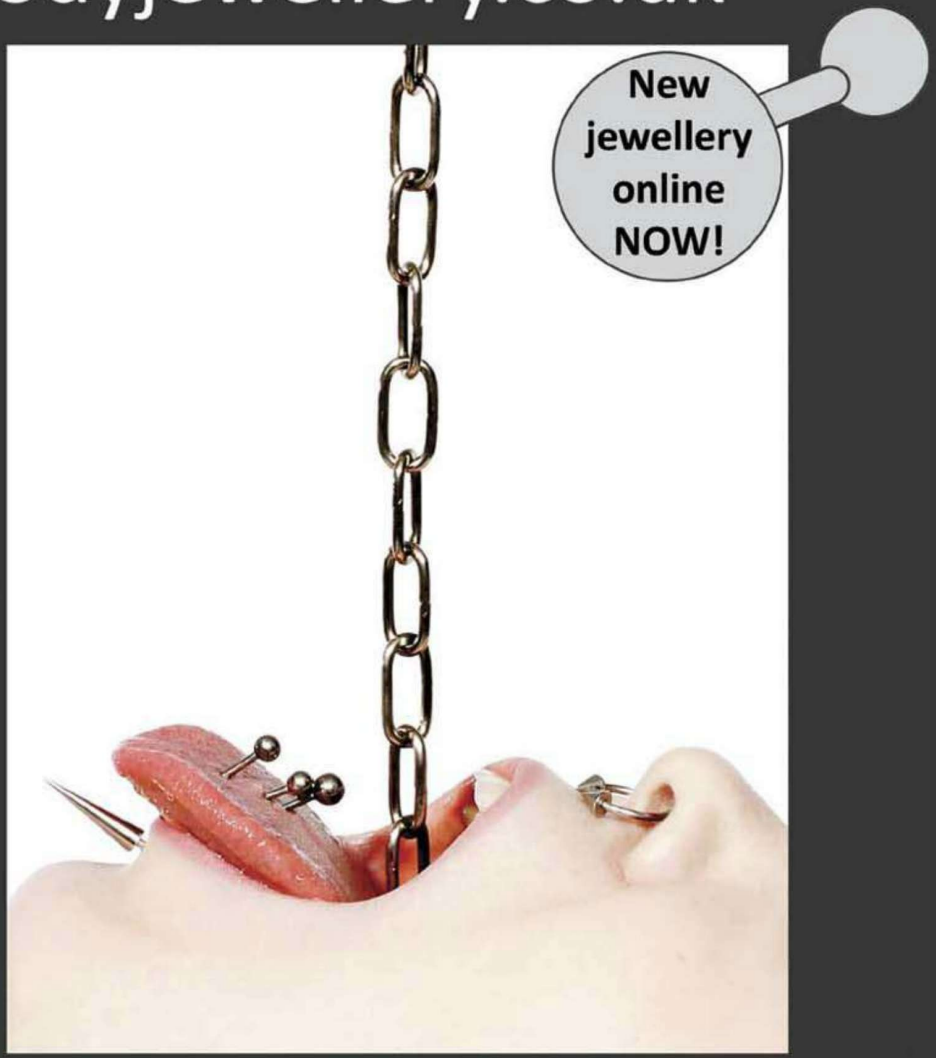
If anybody out there has got a great story to tell with a spin on this, I'd love to hear from you. Great ink is a must as are tip-top photographs, apart from that, pretty much anything goes. Mail us at editor@skindeep.co.uk. What we're looking for is great positive stories to come out of bad situations. The fact that people with indomitable spirit choose to align themselves with tattoo is one of those things in life that shouldn't be passed over so easily…

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